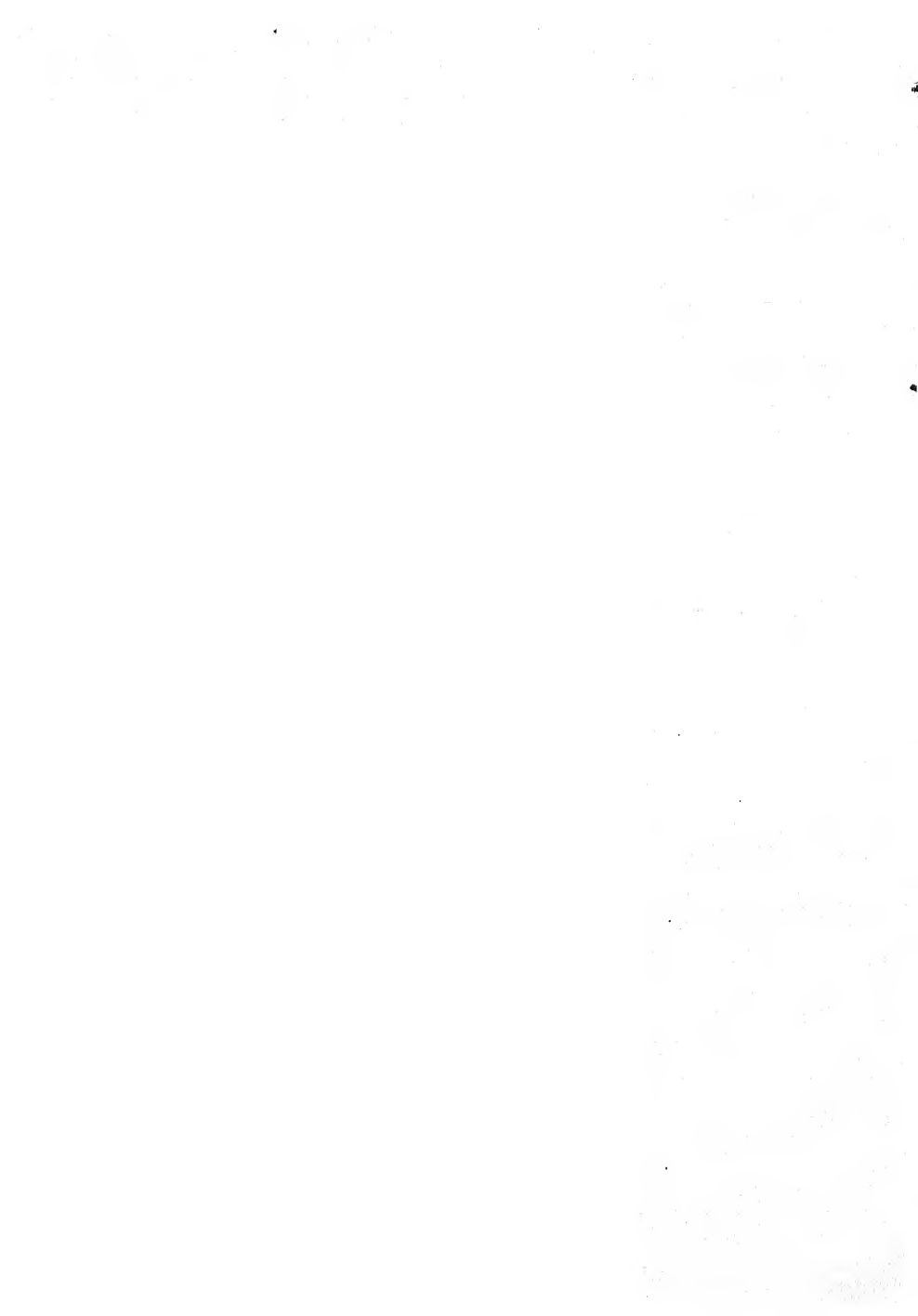


**JAWAHARLAL NEHRU  
AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**



**JAWAHARLAL NEHRU**  
**AND**  
**PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**



**INDIAN INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**  
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## FOREWORD

Between Jumna's riverside villages and Delhi's old and new cities lies the rose-studded Shanti Vana (Garden of Peace). In this an ever green grass mound is the memorial to Jawaharlal Nehru. To the green patch walk thousands of people for paying homage to their beloved builder of modern India. He followed the Mahatma, the Father of the Nation, whose memorial is in Rajghat, on one side of Shanti Vana. On the other side is Vijaya Ghat, the memorial to Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, who was the symbol of simplicity and Nehru's successor as Prime Minister. The present Prime Minister who is the heir of these great leaders, representing tradition and modernity, as well as continuity and change, keeps these natural memorials as sources of evergreen inspiration to the loving people of the nation.

After the freedom struggle, Jawaharlal was invited to direct the Nation towards development as the first Prime Minister of the largest democratic republic, bent upon moving towards socialism. In his personal as well as in public life, Jawaharlal built bridges of understanding and assimilation between tradition and modernity in the development process, and amity and friendship between the contending forces of belligerence in the east and the west. His Panch Sheel (Non-alignment) was as significant a contribution to international relations as Panchayati Raj (Democratic Decentralization) to people's participation in public administration (Government-in-action). His contribution to administration by way of constitution framing, planning and steering the ship of State through turbulent times after partition, and the dynamic adventure of development is not fully explored

and analysed.

The series of talks held at the Institute in November 1974 on Nehru and his views on administration and the addresses he gave for ten years as the President of IIPA and a talk which he gave at Kurnool in 1955 to the services are brought together as a token of tribute to Jawaharlal Nehru as the Nation Builder. His contribution to the science and art of public administration deserves deeper research studies. We hope that this booklet may serve as a catalyst for scholars to pursue the ideas in greater depth and bring out the multidimensional contribution of Jawaharlal Nehru as the head of administration for nearly two decades after Independence. Research in applied as well as in basic sciences benefits from looking across the shoulders of our predecessors besides envisioning the future.

Educated as a scientist and instinctively drawn to poetry and aesthetics, Jawaharlal spent most of his time in jail or in tours or with files. Nevertheless, in his speeches, notings and writings, he left his mark as a profound thinker about contemporary events and problems and has taken decisions to mould them or to solve them. A leader of thought and action of such calibre and wide range forms a fit subject for depth study in the interacting arts of politics and public administration.

V. JAGANNADHAM

*Director*

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC  
ADMINISTRATION

NEW DELHI  
MARCH 25, 1975

# CONTENTS

	PAGE
Foreword	v

## TALKS ON NEHRU

Nehru's Contributions Towards Improvements in Administration	<i>Vidya Charan Shukla</i>	1
Nehru as First Prime Minister and His Impact on Public Administration	<i>Vishnu Sahay</i>	9
Reassessing Nehru's Perspective on Planning	<i>Tarlok Singh</i>	23

## SOME ADDRESSES OF JAWAHARLAL NEHRU ON PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Administration—A Human Problem	37
First Annual General Body Meeting	39
A Word to the Services	41
Second Annual General Body Meeting	55

	PAGE
Third Annual General Body Meeting	64
Fourth Annual General Body Meeting	73
Fifth Annual General Body Meeting	78
Sixth Annual General Body Meeting	85
Seventh Annual General Body Meeting	95
Eighth Annual General Body Meeting	101
Ninth Annual General Body Meeting	111

## APPENDIX

Thinking Big	<i>Paul H. Appleby</i>	119
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# **NEHRU'S CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS IMPROVEMENTS IN ADMINISTRATION**

**Speaker**

**VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA**  
Minister of State for Planning  
Government of India

**Date**

**14th November, 1974**

**Chairman**

**JAGJIVAN RAM**  
Union Minister for Food & Agriculture  
Government of India



Respected Babuji and Friends,

I am grateful to the Director of the Institute for having invited me today on the occasion of Panditji's birthday to deliver a talk on his contribution to Indian administration. It is but appropriate that today's meeting is being chaired by *Babuji*, who in a way is symbolic of our continuous link with Panditji and the administration in India with which he has been associated almost for a continuous period of 30 years, when he, along with Panditji joined the interim government in 1946. When Pandit Nehru became the head of the interim government, his experience as an administrator was minimal, excepting a few years during which he was the President of Allahabad Municipal Committee. The long years that he spent in the service of the country and in the freedom struggle saw him in and out of the jail and his first contact with the working of the Indian administration might well be with jails of the British government of which he was an inhabitant for a considerable period of time. Even though he did not hold any administrative position before he became head of the interim government, he was a keen student and scholar of the historical and political processes and had a very deep insight into the dynamics of the then administration in India, which in his view was devoted to the cause of the sustenance of the British rule. Naturally, this kind of administration had little sympathy with the urges, aspirations and the needs and demands of the people.

#### THE CHALLENGE

Thus in 1946 when Panditji and his colleagues like *Babuji* assumed the reins of power they inherited an administrative system and structure which was devised entirely for a different purpose.

Here was a herculean task of transforming an administrative structure which was autocratic, irresponsible and irresponsive in nature, to that of a democratic structure suited to the needs and genius of the Indians and their aspirations. According to Panditji the focus had now to change from law and order problems to that of socio-economic problems and programmes.

In the period of transition, *i.e.*, between the time he assumed office in the interim government till 15th August, 1947 under his leadership the interim government had to face gigantic tasks like partition settlements, refugee problems, communal holocaust, border problems and transfer of paramouncy powers, etc. It goes to the credit of Panditji and his colleagues that many of these apparently insurmountable and intricate problems were handled smoothly and with great tact, capacity and efficiency. It was no mean tribute to their genius that with little knowledge of the working and intricacies of administrative systems and procedures they performed their administrative functions in a superb manner belying the fears and apprehensions of many sceptics in India and abroad.

The outstanding problems faced by Panditji was the administrative framework and the services left over from the British régime. Because of his charismatic personality and national stature he had no problem in winning over the loyalty of the administrative personnel and, without breaking the structure, he tried to mould and adapt it to the changed needs and circumstances. Many a time questions are raised as to why he did not bring about basic changes in the structure and personnel of the administration, specially when he knew that the British had left an administrative system which had little sympathy with the masses, which was class-ridden and which performed for the good of the colonial masters and a narrow elite within the country. This is a debatable point with no simple answer. It is also linked with the order of priorities laid down for the governance of free India. The gigantic problems faced by partition like refugee rehabilitation, re-building and re-shaping national army, integration of states, etc., brooked no delay and had to be faced immediately by the then administrative apparatus. It is a tribute to his administrative genius helped by Sardar Patel and a band of devoted civil servants that these problems could be met headlong and surmounted reasonably successfully within the administrative framework inherited by the national



government.

#### ADMINISTRATION AND THE COMMON MAN

Circumstances might not have been propitious in undertaking radical changes in the administrative system and personnel, but this should not lead us to lose sight of the fact that Panditji was fully concerned with this problem and in his own way tried to introduce and influence administrative changes which he had visualised even before coming to power. The cornerstone of his views and ideas of administration was human approach to administrative problems. He wanted to bring administration as near to the common man as possible and was very much concerned with the administration at the grassroot levels. That is why he laid great emphasis on administration of Community Development Programme and Panchayati Raj. He wanted to strengthen these institutions and to endow them with real powers. He was of the view that the officials' role *vis-a-vis* these institutions should be confined to that of advisors. He thought that the Panchas and Sarpanchas should be given greatest latitude to the extent of committing mistakes because he thought that is the way they are going to learn and administer and take care of their immediate and day-to-day problems. A major reason for ineffectiveness of these institutions is the officials' mistrust of the elected functionaries to allow them to function independently of the tutelage of the officials. Panditji strongly felt that greater trust should be put in their ability to function and learn by committing mistakes. He rightly said, "The mistakes of panchayats will not endanger the security of the country."

In one of his Presidential speeches in this very Institute he laid great emphasis on the fact that a great part of the administration in this country at the lower levels was being carried on by these non-official elements. He remarked, "I should like this Institute to devote its attention to the study of the administrative problems lower down than the official scale, and more especially to the question of the non-servicemen coming into the picture and taking part in administration at the lower levels."

He was the driving spirit behind the Community Development and Panchayati Raj programmes. He looked upon these programmes as powerful and effective instruments in bringing

administration nearer to the people. These were the media through which every active member of the public could be drawn to do something or other in some form or other for the good of the community. Unfortunately, these programmes have not succeeded and come up to our expectations for a number of reasons and a lot more remains to be done to make them as effective instruments of administration at the grassroots level. Nevertheless these institutions are symbolic of one of Panditji's major contributions to Public Administration in India.

Panditji was equally concerned with the problem of administration of tribal areas and the Girijans. He was instrumental in giving new directions and orientation to this problem which had to be looked at differently from the usual or normal pattern of administration. Persons concerned with tribal administration had to be people with a missionary zeal, having a deeper understanding who could identify themselves with the tribal problems without in any way developing an overbearing attitude or interfering with the tribal way of life. Panditji laid a great emphasis on specialised training for administrators concerned with such special areas of administration.

Panditji laid great emphasis on the devotion of the civil servants to the general welfare and cause of the masses they were expected to serve. In the context of Indian administration and the formulation of socio-economic plans and their implementation the administrators at all levels had a very important role to play. In his view "an administrator has to work with some objectives in view, more especially in a dynamic society". Administration is not confined to merely just doing some odd job, putting a note on a file, etc., but it has got to aim at an objective—it had to work to an end. Every administrator had to continuously ask himself what are the ends of administration, what kind of society we are aiming at and where are we going? How far are the existing Institutions suited to the type of society for which we are working and how far they fit in with the type of society that we are trying to evolve?

#### FAITH IN PLANNING

Broadly speaking the kind of society we are aiming at and the basic objectives have been spelt out in our 5-year plans which cover every aspect of our life. The strides that India has taken

in the fields of industry, technology and agriculture testify to the vision and sagacity of Panditji. When under his leadership huge industrial projects like steel, etc., were planned there was criticism from many quarters who doubted the wisdom of investing millions in heavy industries and multi-power projects, but the strengthening of our industrial infrastructure has given us a measure of national progress, pride and honour. Today we are in a position not only to take care of much of our industrial and defence needs, but also in a position to export technological know-how in many fields.

The socio-economic planning initiated by Panditji was a *sine qua non* in our war against backwardness and poverty and provided the infrastructure for building up a socialist society.

The administrators and technocrats have a major role in the fulfilment of our basic objectives. Panditji strongly felt that in the new venture on which India has embarked, not only the administrators but "the other types of specialised workers like the scientists and engineers are becoming more and more important". The traditional tendency of treating the administrators at the top as far superior to a person engaged in any other occupation like engineering service or education, etc., has to go. In his view, "the future of a country like India depends on a multitude of activities on a multitude of specialised experts, experienced men, men of wisdom and the coordination of all these activities."

In this context, the present-day controversy between the generalist administrators and the technocrats seems to be sterile. Their roles are to be seen as complementary rather than competitive in the present-day context of administration.

#### PANDITJI AND IIPA

One of the major contributions of Panditji to administration was the founding of this very Institute with which he was associated since its inception as its President. He took great interest in its working and in his Presidential addresses at its annual conferences expressed his ideas and concept of the administration and the role this Institute could play as a national institute and clearing house for researches in various facets of administration and for serving as a forum where academicians and practising administrators could inter-act. I am glad that over the years this Institute has been

instrumental in bringing out new researches and ideas in the field of Public Administration. Its expanding training activities for middle and senior level administrators will go a long way in effecting a progressive change in the relationship between the civil services and the people and developing new attitudes and behaviour among the civil servants. To the extent it succeeds in these efforts, it would be fulfilling the wishes and ideas of Panditji.

We are very happy that *Babuji* is now the Chairman of the Institute's governing body; under his leadership and guidance, I am sure the Institute will march ahead in its programme and thus bring administration nearer to the people and orientate behaviour and attitudes of the administrators so that they are increasingly aware of their responsibility for the achievement of our basic objective of serving the common citizen and the neglected sections of the community.



# **NEHRU AS FIRST PRIME MINISTER AND HIS IMPACT ON PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

Speaker

VISHNU SAHAY  
Former Governor of Assam

Date

15th November, 1974

Chairman

Prof. M. V. MATHUR  
Director-General, National Council of Applied  
Economic Research, New Delhi



Mr. Chairman and Friends,

I am happy to get this opportunity of speaking on "Nehru as the First Prime Minister and His Impact on Public Administration". Like all retired people, I like to tell stories, but alas, I now have begun to notice a strange reluctance among listeners to let me complete my stories. This evening, fortunately, I have got a captive audience and I am very grateful. In particular, I like to tell stories about Panditji—I dislike this new practice of referring to him as Nehru—he is still too near us to deserve the dropping of the honorific. I like talking about him. And I had better confess at once that contact with him always brought a glow of—how shall I put it—a glow of happiness, of exaltation and the memory of that glow time has not dimmed. Unfashionable though it is these days, when the right thing is to ascribe all our ills—from over-production of babies to under-production of food—to his lack of realism and administrative ability, unfashionable though it may be, I had better confess at once that my sentiments about Panditji are those of an unabashed hero-worshipper. So I fear I shall not be able to bring to bear on my talk that cold clinical detachment which is traditional in this Institute. You should make due allowance for this bias. If my assessment shows some contradictions or confused thinking, you will know what at least one of the causes was.

#### PANDITJI'S PERSONALITY

After this warning, let me say a word about my credentials and their limitations. It would be nice if I could claim some special relationship, as the phrase goes, with Panditji. It would be nice to draw a picture of cosy *tete-a-tete* consultations between Prime

Minister and his Secretary in which the latter would put the boss right about all the ins and outs of great affairs. We have seen in recent years some books purporting to be memoirs of Panditji's colleagues and subordinates in which it has been fully established that, contrary to the popular impression, it was the auto-biographers who really ran the country, no doubt with some dutiful assistance from the Prime Minister also. The temptation to talk like that is strong—after all, who is there to contradict me? But I am afraid a claim of that kind would be untrue and what is worse would be immediately detected as untrue. Everyone knows that Panditji's was a reticent nature. I doubt if there were many people including his close colleagues not to mention civil servants, to whom he revealed his thoughts in detail. After ten years of work under him in connection with Kashmir affairs, I could not and cannot say what really his view of the personalities important in that State was, or even what his conceptual framework of the Kashmir situation and the perspective were. I hope in this Institute my use of the phrases "conceptual framework" and "perspective" will meet with approval. It will show that I read the Institute's publications with assiduity. No, Panditji did not elaborate his views in the manner of a situation paper discussing options. One had often to piece together the working of his mind from the nature of his personality, from one's own interpretation of his approach to life, from his stray remarks made on what might be only tangential aspects. This is not to suggest that he avoided detailed discussion or decision—indeed very much the contrary: it was all too easy to put up to him for orders matters he should not have been troubled with at all. All that I am suggesting is that he was not the type of leader who on broad policy was easily led by his subordinates and followers. He did trust people and sometimes the trust was not deserved. His own nature was such that he found it difficult to ascribe deception or meanness to those who worked with him. My impressions of the administrative aspects of his work are based partly on hearsay and partly on personal contact. During 1947 and 1948 my contact with him was remote. I was then Secretary of the Ministry of Food and saw him only at Cabinet meetings or at meetings of sub-committees of the Cabinet. How he was led into accepting the inflationary decision to decontrol foodgrains in 1947-48 I do not know but I do know of his anxiety when the results began to show themselves



soon after. I well remember the efforts which the supporters of decontrol tried to make to conceal from him the resulting rise in food prices and his determined efforts to arrest further damage. I remember also the forceful way in which he used to object to reliance on imported foodgrains and his emphasis on increasing production. In the short term, of course, there was no remedy at that time except to procure, ration and fill the gap through imports. After 1948 and till 1958, I used to see him frequently but only in connection with Kashmir affairs. His supervision in these affairs was close but Kashmir is still a delicate subject and I had better remember my oath of secrecy before I talk more about it. I grant there is respectable precedent for disregarding that oath in some of the accounts which have been published in the last few years but I prefer to go by the rules. About his impact on other matters, I know only by hearsay but the grapevine among Secretaries was pretty effective and my knowledge of what went on would classify as about fair, though far from comprehensive or authoritative. From 1958 till 1972, I was Cabinet Secretary and my contact with the administration at the Centre and in the States was closer. One must not forget the States in this connection, for the Prime Minister, our first Prime Minister, bore an inherited vicarious responsibility for what went on even there. His impact on administration in the States was usually closely tied up with local politics. But there were occasions when his influence was not used merely or mainly on that plane. In the setting up of the National Development Council for Planning, for instance, he was sowing the germ of much future development in the State-Centre relations. Here I must mention another limitation from which I suffer. Quite a lot of administration has its political aspects. It is difficult to say when a Prime Minister acts as a politician only and when as an administrator only. When he goes to the airport to greet the Prime Minister of the new State of Trans-Moldania—I hope you will be able to locate it on the map and tells him of the age-old bonds of friendship that exist between his country and ours and our shared ideals of peace and social justice, is the Prime Minister doing an administrative act or is that just politics? When the Prime Minister drops a minister and sends him out as a governor, is that a political act or a piece of administration? It could be a bit of both. When there is a reshuffling of ministers from one ministry or department to another, it could be

for administrative reasons alone, or more probably, there would be a mixture of political considerations with administration. After a general election, and sometimes between elections also, there was some reorganisation. There would be a regrouping of subjects and sometimes a new ministry would be set up. There often was a tussle among the coming incumbents to secure the more important-sounding tidbits to their own demesne. I remember that one year when the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research was being allocated to two ministers, each side carefully announced, through the usual informed sources, that they had each obtained the same number of subjects. For the purpose of this census, some subjects had to be divided into several heads. Neither minister was going to admit that he had received a smaller share of the original ministry. Panditji's attitude to such debates was usually one of slightly irritated tolerance. He expected agreed or almost agreed proposals to be put up to him. If a debate was forced on him for decision, he usually decided on the basis of administrative convenience and if the arguments on either side were balanced, victory would usually go to the protagonist who more closely conformed to the type of minister Panditji liked. For there was a type which definitely appealed to him. He definitely liked ministers who had ideas and promised performance and were articulate. In allocating ministries, not merely were administrative considerations involved, but all sorts of political and semi-political considerations came in. Which part of India was unrepresented? Which was developing a feeling of being left out? Was the present man doing a good job? What was the feeling in the Party about him? There were innumerable such points to be considered. My limitation is that like the rest of my kind, I affected to be superior to politics—that was a game beneath the notice of a high-minded professional civil servant. This limitation has affected my ability to understand and assess the Prime Minister's impact on administration in its fuller sense, and in the short time available, I will deal with the more obviously administrative aspects of his work. I will say, though that the desire to settle by agreement, by consensus rather than by dictate was the keynote of all his actions.

In order to understand the first Prime Minister's role as administrator, it is necessary to bear in mind his own upbringing, the upbringing of his leading colleagues and the system he inherited.

The War had brought about some changes, but in essence, the administration set up in 1947 was the same as in the previous fifty years. There was a Secretariat at headquarters which was supposed to perform staff functions. It was in the Secretariat that all policy was supposed to be decided. Executive work in the field was in the hands of some specialised functional agencies like the Departments of Salt, Excise, Railways, Roads, Irrigation, Agriculture, Education and most important of them all in its impact on the common man, there was the Revenue Agency centring round the Collector and District Magistrate, who was the kingpin of administration in the district and an all-purposes executive and coordinator. He was something like a minor pro-consul. There was a hierarchy for all functions. There was delegation, of course, but basically all authority was in the hands of agents of the administration, unhampered by popular association. Public service was expected to be a neutral function divorced from political or factional connections. There was local government of sorts at various levels, local government which, by and large, even then was a byword for corruption and inefficiency. These organisations were chronically short of funds; the public alleged that they misused whatever little they had. Local Government bodies were the earliest organisations based on the elective principle. In the top echelons of government they were tolerated as a political convenience but were not regarded as serious contributors to administration. I mention this in view of what happened later—I refer to Panditji's major effort towards administrative reform—the schemes of democratic decentralisation.

#### STATUS QUO IN ADMINISTRATIVE SET-UP

The War brought about changes both in structure and in style. There was much more to be done in fields hitherto untouched. Government intervention became necessary in new fields—industrial production, price controls, distribution not merely of industrial goods but also of food. Unconsciously, the administrator was being prepared for the change from *laissez-faire* to the Planning and Nationalisation of a few years later. From the point of view of administrative science, a notable feature was the blurring of line and staff functions. Executive functions began to be appropriated by the headquarters Secretariat under the pressure

of war demands, policy and implementation tended to gravitate into the same hands at headquarters. Somewhat contradictory to this trend, there were set up new autonomous or semi-autonomous organisations for specialised functions. Both these developments occurred at the same time. They were to be the model for developments later. Politically, the model was that of the British Parliamentary system. One might have expected that the great change from rule by a colonial power to rule by Indians themselves would bring in drastic, radical changes in the administrative system. At the very least, some sort of spoils system could reasonably have been expected. Was the revolutionary work after Freedom to be left to the bureaucratic legacy of colonial rule? Would new cadres not be needed? There would have been no lack of candidates, with honourable records in the freedom struggle, who could have provided material for these cadres and the leadership for building them up.

None of these changes came about. Even the Constitution in its administrative and political aspects was based on the Government of India Act of 1935. There was no radical change in the administrative set-up. Potential members of cadres turned to elections and to local politics.

How did this come about? I lay no claim to inside knowledge or special insight but will offer some explanations—on this, opinion will vary and there will undoubtedly be other valid explanations also. In my opinion, the continuation of the old structure was basically due to the circumstances of the transfer of power. It was a peaceful transfer under the legal cover of an Act of the British power. The whole atmosphere was one of legality. There were none of the violent impulses of a revolution in any sense of the term. In these conditions, the *status quo* had its own momentum, self-contradictory as the phrase may sound. But when you get into power with a ready-made machine at hand, and you are constitutionally disinclined to violent methods, you inevitably continue with the existing structure and habit strengthens it. The personality of the leaders had also a great deal to do with the acceptance of the existing machinery. Sardar Patel who was directly in charge of the Home Ministry, to which belonged the subject Administration in its narrower sense, was content with the structure of the machine. He is on record as saying that the machine was good enough; only adequate masters were needed to

utilise it properly. Panditji himself was no doctrinaire opponent of the system he inherited. If the truth must be told, there was a good deal of Harrow and Cambridge in him and in spite of his close association with popular movements and his exposure to socialism in action in Europe in the thirties, I believe that as far as methods as distinct from objectives were concerned, he was a liberal in the old sense of the term. If that were not so, when he took up reorganisation of the Secretariat in 1951 after the Sardar's death, when he was on his own in such matters, he would not have entrusted the matter to Shri Gopalaswami Iyengar. Shri Gopalaswami was a former civil servant and was no fiery innovator panting for radical reorientation. I forget the scheme he produced but from what I remember, it was largely concerned with a logical grouping of the subjects the Government had to deal with into appropriate departments and ministries and with setting up overlord ministers. The latter proposal was new and died a natural death. Who was to be an overlord and who was to be his subordinate? It was to be an innovation but not an earth-shaking one. A Professor in an Institute of Public Administration could well have fathered it. The secretariat and agency systems continued as before. The Rules of Business were respected almost *in toto*, the only change being in the substitution of Minister for Executive Councillor, and Prime Minister for the Governor-General. The States were advised to adopt similar rules. The Prime Minister was a radical but he did not wish to experiment with revolutionary and untried systems of administration.

Apart from the personalities of the leaders who mattered and the inherent strength of a working system in a non-revolutionary situation, I think the personality of the officials who directly worked under the Prime Minister had also something to do with the durability of the old machine. I remember a story current at the time. It is no doubt apocryphal. It is about Sir G. S. Bajpai, a senior official who had attained great distinction under the Raj and was alleged to have carried on anti-national propaganda in U.S.A. as Agent of the Government of India. In 1947, he came back to Delhi and was employed as Secretary-General in the Ministry of External Affairs which was in the P.M.'s direct charge. Stout party workers, so the story runs, questioned Panditji why he employed in a key position an official who had been a pillar of the British rule. Panditji replied: "That may be, but almost before

I have completed a sentence, the man produces a draft perfectly stating my views and conclusions. He does it so well that I then have merely to sign without even altering a comma." The adaptability of his principal civil servants and their ability to speak the same language, so to speak, may also have had something to do with Panditji's disinclination to do anything radical or drastic with the services or the system he had inherited.

Where then was his impact on Administration? This can best be considered under a few headings. First, the laying down of policies, then the structure for implementing them, the choice of personnel to man the structure, action taken to monitor and follow up implementation and lastly, his contribution to the study and application of the science of administration.

#### CONTRIBUTION TO THE SCIENCE OF ADMINISTRATION

The last, namely, what did he do for the study of the theory and principles of administration and their application to the contemporary situation can be briefly dealt with. He had little time to study the subject in any great depth but he realised the need for work on this subject. The Institute itself is a standing example of his interest in improvement and development of administration. Professor Appleby had no more sympathetic listener than Panditji and many of the reforms we talk of—the setting up of Organisation and Methods, of Operations Research, the attempt to introduce modern techniques of management owe their birth to his support. His contribution to the spread of the gospel has been substantial. How much of the gospel has been accepted in practice is another matter. But then, members of this Institute themselves know, how difficult it is to effect reforms though one may know what should be done. I have been deeply interested in this Institute and have watched how much effort has been put in training, in research and the like, but I sometime do wonder whether, viewed as a whole, matters have not deteriorated. Possibly, other more basic causes than mere lack of administrative expertise are at work. As Curzon, that impatient reformer, found seventy years ago, the Government of India is like a ponderous elephant. Some paint here, a goad there, does not really make the beast move faster. The bridging of the hiatus between study and practice, between the scholars and the practitioners defied

solutions in Panditji's day and from what I hear the position is the same today.

#### ROLE IN POLICY-MAKING

In the field of defining policies, the first Prime Minister's role has been overwhelming. Take foreign policy. It was his special genius to establish that, in the circumstances of his time, non-alignment was the right policy of India. In this he was far in advance of his advisers. If he had followed the advice of people round him, India would have started as an aligned State, with consequences which, I believe, have overtaken all those in Asia who adopted that line. Of our foreign policy, it may truly be said that he was both the architect and the main implementor. One result of this was that the External Affairs Ministry—I am talking of twenty or twentyfive years ago—did not get into the habit of producing situation reports stating the considerations, analysing them and presenting options. There was a marked tendency to wait for the word from the P.M. himself.

In domestic matters, Panditji was the only true begetter of the Industrial Policy Resolution, of the concept of a public sector handling whatever industries or activities were appropriately handled by the State, of the policy towards Science, and in particular, Atomic Energy. Land Reforms and Statistics owe much to his support. The policy to be pursued in tribal areas was wholly drafted by him.

The list could be multiplied. I have mentioned only subjects which at one time or the other were my concern.

#### IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICIES

After policy-making comes the question of how implementation was organised and who were the men chosen to implement. Let me take first a field in which he obtained outstanding success, the field of Atomic Energy. Scientists are special people who need very delicate handling. That has been the experience everywhere. The nature of the work is such that methods of administration which have to look after public accountability, as in government work, or which concentrate on results and on obedience as in business are often inappropriate and lead either to

frustration and inactivity or to flight of personnel. In setting up the autonomous Atomic Energy Commission and in defining its powers and responsibilities, the Prime Minister evolved the right organisation. In entrusting the work to the devoted, imaginative and ruthless Dr. Homi Bhaba, Panditji got a man who, apart from being a great scientist, was as great an administrator. Another instance of Panditji choosing the man and a special organisation for implementation was in the case of the Indian Statistical Institute. This was given autonomy with government control not over day-to-day operations but through a periodic review by an independent committee. This was a new pattern. Day-to-day control over such organisations is stultifying, at the same time there has to be some mode of periodic evaluation to safeguard the proper use of public funds. The legislation declaring the Indian Statistical Institute an institution of National Importance sought to strike the right mean between complete autonomy and public control. In the case of the ISI too, Panditji chose a specially suitable man to support. Professor Mahalanobis was not a great administrator but he was a great achiever. A man of great gifts and imagination, he can rightly be called the Father of Statistical Science in India. I cannot help recalling a story illustrative of Panditji's style in dealing with him. The Professor, as he used to be called, had selected a retired Deputy Collector to head his sample survey organisation. For some reason obscure to me now, the appointment had to be referred to the Union Public Service Commission. The Commission, guardian of the public right to have appointments open to all those who are qualified, objected to the appointment. The Home Ministry following the convention that the Commission's recommendations should be accepted supported their view. The Cabinet Secretary gave no further thought to the issue and acquiesced. The Prime Minister was appealed to by the Professor and was quite annoyed that the Commission's objections should have been accepted. The Commission was then overruled. Sometime later, when the question of this officer continuing came up again, the Prime Minister said: "I know quite well that the man is just an ordinary deputy collector and there are plenty of suitable replacements but the Professor is an unusually gifted man. When dealing with such people, you have often to tailor your rules to them rather than the other way round. You better have a talk



with the Professor.” This little anecdote tells a lot about Panditji’s style of personnel management. But he was not always as fortunate in his choice of key men as in these two cases.

#### PLANNING

Now I think I ought to mention two innovations which mark Panditji’s greatest impact on administration. The first is the concept of central planning and the setting up of a Planning Commission. The idea of a separate body, outside the Ministry of Finance, laying down the law about how central resources should be used appeared to many to be incompatible with our Constitution. Dr. John Matthai, a statesman not given to action based on personal considerations, thought so. The idea seemed full of other difficulties also. Was the Commission to consist of ivory tower economists and experts who would just prepare a plan and then leave it to the Ministries and Cabinet to accept it or alter it? If so, it might remain just an academic body. Was the Commission to consist only of public men who would have the influence but not the expertise to plan for this large country? Panditji hit upon the happy device of a mixed set-up; the P.M. himself to be Chairman, the Finance Minister to be an important member and then other public men and experts. At that time, the Commission was not conceived of as having veto rights nor was it concerned with directly monitoring and supervising implementation but as time passed, more and more ministers wanted to become members of the Commission and its functioning began to approximate to that of a super-finance ministry with unwritten powers of veto. I do not know whether the Prime Minister fully appreciated the change or whether he approved of it. Perhaps he did. He was dissatisfied with the progress achieved and was always desperately looking round for some way, for some person who would watch implementation, progress and coordinate it. It may be he thought that the Planning Commission could take on these functions. A little later, he brought in Shri T. T. Krishnamachari as Minister for Economic Coordination. I can think of many other administrative decisions of his which are best explained by his burning desire to somehow discover some person or organisational device which would oil the wheels of production.

Community Development and Democratic Decentralisation

represented Panditji's main effort towards solving the dilemma of how to reconcile democracy with the needs of a technological age. Was everything to be dependent on a few planners and executives at the Centre? How were the people to be associated with the effort? Verdicts will vary on the way he set about this programme. May be he went too fast. Maybe no other halfway houses were practicable. Maybe the experiment has not been given sufficiently sustained trial. Are there any other lines open for achieving development without totalitarianism?

There is no time left for describing Panditji's other innovations, the form and management principles of public enterprises for example. I have mentioned his consuming zeal to get results and his search for ways to achieve them. I think it would be only fair to say that he failed to discover a practical way of institutionalising a system of watching implementation. For that matter, none of his professional advisers, including myself, made any really useful suggestions to him on this. He used to issue directives but there was no regular way of checking what action was taken on them. I was once consulted by a minister who had got into hot water with Panditji over premature publicizing of a paper before it ever reached the Cabinet. Panditji demanded an explanation. The minister's position had been shaky for some time. I gave him the advice to lie low for a bit and say nothing in reply. The device worked. Maybe some day administrators will be able to develop some system which will enable a Prime Minister to supervise effectively without setting up a parallel secretariat of his own.

There are many stories to tell, stories of his generosity, of his essential humanity, of his desire to help people whom he had been angry with, of his respect for the views of others, of his love of consensus, of his fairness, of his respect for the law. There are stories also of how he was taken in by some plausible adventurer, of how he was soft on incompetence. One could talk of his comparative ignorance of the niceties of administrative science and practice. What do these stories amount to? The basic fact remains that it was due to him, his sense of fairness, his decency, his sense of purpose that this new democracy remained durable when many other democracies stumbled. Over all he did whether at the Centre or in the States, he cast an ambience of what I cannot do better than describe by the Hindi word "Sharafat". That was his greatest impact on administration.

## **REASSESSING NEHRU'S PERSPECTIVE ON PLANNING**

<b>Speaker</b>	<b>TARLOK SINGH</b> Former Member, Planning Commission Government of India
<b>Date</b>	<b>16th November, 1974</b>
<b>Chairman</b>	<b>H. K. PARANJAPE</b> Member, Monopolies & Restrictive Trade Practices Commission, Government of India



Chairman and Friends,

The decade which separates us from Jawaharlal Nehru has been on the whole a period of disappointment in achieving economic growth and in improving the condition of the people. Every social and economic problem has assumed larger dimensions. Presently, the functioning political system does not appear capable of putting the nation to work. Also, at this time, there is too little articulation of principles and assumptions and methods of practical advance in resolving the immediate and prospective problems of the country.

Though the reality has changed materially over the past decade, current comments frequently recall what Jawaharlal Nehru said or did, or failed to do, and in some part he is held accountable for the present malaise. A decade is a long enough period to begin to look objectively at his ideas on planning and to examine their adequacy in the context both of more recent developments and the present economic scene. We give our best respect to Nehru and his thought by separating the ephemeral and the contemporary from that which has continuing value, marking the gaps observed since his day, and redefining our own obligations for the next phase.

#### REBUILDING THE FABRIC OF INDIA

Through life Nehru held close to a whole range of social and personal goals. Planning was but one of them. Because these goals had their roots in explicit moral values and perceptions, they had a high degree of consistency and interdependence. Much the same attributes ran through his diverse objectives and the means through which he pursued them. For Nehru, planning

was more than a method, more than an exercise in administration. Planning meant rebuilding the economic and social fabric of India, breaking the barrier of poverty, modernizing institutions and the apparatus of production, and completing the entire sweep of scientific and technological change. Thus, Nehru's perspectives on planning and the content and prestige he sought to give to planning were a rendering of his hopes and visions for the present and the future of India.

Nehru's views on planning have to be pieced together from what he wrote and spoke on aspects of policy which were uppermost in his mind at different times. It would be fair to say that, while holding together, his many statements and observations do not add up to a system. They contained a large element of personal reflection and intuition. For all their richness and sincerity, the fragments never came together into a whole. It happened that, in his own time, his ideas were often accepted too readily and uncritically. A more studied effort of his associates and others would have helped to define problems and to remove possible contradictions. In the process, his ideas would also have been better executed. Far too much was left to him to do alone. He too was content to let it be so. Being concerned more with directions of advance than the detail, Nehru feared that precise definitions might turn too easily into dogmas and slogans which come in the way of clear thinking. In a world which is rapidly changing, he said, let the facts of life decide.

#### CONCERN WITH ACTION

In summarizing Nehru's ideas on planning in the form of what may seem like cut and dried propositions, we are apt to overlook two facts. First, here was thought evolving itself through and in the midst of action. Nehru was responsible for the government and the consequences of its policies. He had to keep the economy on the move. His primary purpose was action, not analysis or search for truth or doctrine. He had to reconcile the difficult realities of the moment with the more distant ideals of the future. Faced with a crisis of production, as in 1948, or with a foreign exchange crisis, as in 1957, he was ready to temper the future in favour of the present. Indeed, for the very sake of the future, the present had to be secured.

The second consideration to remember is that since action, today and tomorrow, was the primary motif, Nehru's leading ideas on planning should be assessed, not only as abstract theories, but for their practical impact on India over the years. This makes a large theme by itself. Nevertheless, we can say that, with all the limitations of which we are aware, India's present industrial and economic capacities, her scientific and technical talent, and her institutional resources are as good a legacy as any one statesman can hope to leave to a succeeding generation. It is up to us to put these resources to fuller use. Doubtless, there have been failures, yet, can we not say that we have now the essential apparatus of technological self-reliance, and most of what we need for economic self-reliance? Given the intensive effort needed and new strategies for transforming agriculture and the unorganised sector of the economy, eradication of the more glaring features of poverty is now a task that can be accomplished within a decade.

#### KEY PROPOSITIONS

The main elements of Nehru's thought on planning can be summed up in five propositions, largely in his own words.

First, Nehru never doubted that science and technology could solve the economic problems and overcome poverty. To him, an industrial civilization appeared inevitable. Therefore, industrialization held the key to economic progress. Within industry, the greater priority had to be given to basic and heavy industries or, else, there would be continuing dependence. On the relationship between technology and social change, Nehru thought that it was not so much ideology which changed human life, but rather the growth of science which constantly moulded social and economic structures. The social structure had to and would adapt its forms to new functions brought about or made possible by science and technology.

Secondly, only a socialist pattern of society, which subordinated acquisitiveness to cooperation and the general good, could subserve the interest of society as a whole. In such a social order, the means of production should be largely owned by society and operated for its benefit. From this followed the view that, in industry and allied fields of large-scale activity, the public sector should expand absolutely and relatively in comparison with the

private sector. This being the main direction of new investment, there would yet be room for private enterprise, and it should be allowed to function with the necessary freedom in the area allowed to it.

Thirdly, while industry was the leading sector in creating the new conditions of growth, agriculture constituted the foundation for the economic and technical transformation of India. Nehru thought of agriculture, not alone, but as part of a composite entity. To this larger entity belonged community projects, village and small industries, and cooperation. As people became ready for it, cooperation would extend also to production. Without pressing for it too far, Nehru saw the necessity of cooperative farming and would have been astonished to learn that this was no longer an active plank in official policies for India's planned development. He thought of agriculture, cooperation and community development as providing a certain balance between the pursuit of science and technology and the nurturing of those basic values which were so essential to human development. Moreover, they offered the principal means for harnessing the cooperation and energies of the masses of the people in the rural areas.

In the fourth place, for giving effect to his approach to planning and development, Nehru relied on a series of Five-Year Plans. These were seen against the perspective of longer-term development and were to be undertaken *without a break*. But for the Five Year Plans, with which he associated himself intimately, Nehru's ideas could have scarcely got to the ground. He was conscious of their role, for, as he said at a moment of crisis in 1962, the Plan was the warp and weft of our national life.

Finally, far from regarding it as an obstacle to development, Nehru believed that democracy held possibilities denied to other political systems. Through democracy alone could we hope to resolve deep conflicts within society by peaceful methods. If we failed to promote the freedom and growth of the individual, all the material good that we achieve might only lead to conflicts of the soul and disintegration of the social group. Democracy had the merit of being able to bring opposing economic and social doctrines nearer to one another and creating, thus, a larger national unity, a consensus in the service of the entire people. Moreover, in this and other contexts, Nehru reminded himself constantly that ends



were never enough by themselves; they were shaped by the means that led to them.

#### THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

As we recall Nehru's main propositions on planning, we ask ourselves if events of the past decade have revealed facets of which, earlier, neither he, nor his contemporaries, had been sufficiently seized. It would be surprising if this were not the case. As conditions change, each period has necessarily to redefine its own tasks and to search for its own answers. To an extent, the tasks we confront now might have been different from what they are if certain events of the past decade had taken a different turn. It is difficult to believe, for instance, that had Nehru lived, there would have been a sudden war with Pakistan in 1965, a forced devaluation of the rupee in 1966, abandonment of the original Fourth Plan for the period 1966-1971, a three year plan holiday in 1967, or a great split in the Indian National Congress in 1969. Later events would have been influenced accordingly. As always, history has its might-have-beens. Even allowing for these, we have to admit that several of the more deep-rooted features of the present economic situation would still have faced us. For, these features are to be traced to certain inherent weaknesses in our economy and social structure, the patterns of development priorities we have followed, and the failures which have occurred within the administrative and the political system.

#### TASKS RE-EXAMINED

Nehru's perspectives should be re-examined from two different standpoints. What can we learn about their continuing validity and adequacy from the happenings of the past decade? Secondly, tested against present facts, what modifications or underpinning would now be considered essential? Inevitably, posing and answering such questions involves personal biases and judgements, and there is room for honest differences. Let us take each proposition in turn.

We have seen impressive progress in the building up of infra-structures and in scientific research. Large-scale application of the results of research has been limited mainly to the modern

sectors of the economy, or to activities within its direct range of influence. Slowly, science is beginning to reach out to segments of the agricultural economy. As a consequence of the existing rural structure and the pattern of land distribution, medium-sized and large farmers are the principal beneficiaries. Altogether, the economic basis of rural capitalism and individualistic farming has been strengthened, and genuinely cooperative approaches in the interest of the weaker groups or of the community as a whole have become much more difficult than before. Can we still say, as Nehru did, that far-reaching changes in social organization and structure in the desired directions would follow directly from changes in technology? We could go even further and argue that one of our key failures in recent years has been to give too little weight to structural and institutional changes which were long overdue, to which the whole political system had indeed pledged itself. Nehru's line during crucial discussions on land reform in 1956 suggests that he would have been prepared to modify his more extreme formulation and give to structural change an independent and equal dimension with technological change.

High expectations were held of the public sector in the earlier period and under certain conditions, they could still come true. Since much the greater part of industrial production occurs in the private sector, the increased share of investment in the public sector has changed only marginally the essential nature of our industrial and commercial economy. The public sector cannot secure a dominant position unless large-scale nationalization of existing industry is undertaken at the same time. Nehru did not favour such a course, and the issue could be argued. But no less important than its size is the quality of performance in the public sector. There is much to be done to improve the internal management of every industrial enterprise in the public sector. Recent experience has driven home the conclusion that the overall economic conditions for efficient performance in all large enterprises, whether public or private, are identical. Neither will be efficient without the other also becoming efficient. Therefore, public policies have to be designed accordingly. The same conditions of demand and constraints in supply affect the two sectors in a mixed economy, whatever be the proportions between them and the composition of each. Thus, the earlier distinctions drawn in the Industrial Policy Resolution of 1956, and favoured by

Nehru, have been found to be inadequate.

Strategies for the rural sector advanced in the fifties, with which Nehru had strong sympathy, have not worked too well and have since led to results vastly different from those anticipated. This is not to say that they were wrong in conception, but rather that their execution has raised complex issues and has called, in turn, for further strategies for action. In retrospect, we have to concede that in the past, agriculture did not receive its due share of scarce resources like foreign exchange, and the scale of investment in agriculture was less than adequate. Community development, a vital concept, became through the years too much a part of the administrative network. It did not succeed in growing into a movement which continually nourishes community action and welfare at the base of rural society. Stronger forces have been at work in contrary directions, and these too must now be understood and channelled anew. Of the institutions of local democracy, or Panchayati Raj, the current belief is that, more and more, they are becoming a prey to the pulls of power politics. Responsibility for this is shared widely between political parties and higher levels of administration, and surely a different set of results can be obtained if the nation so desires. Something of enormous value is being lost through drift and short-sightedness. We have to face the fact that the country is at the cross-roads. How rural India will now be transformed, how landless and other underprivileged groups will be integrated as equal citizens into a dynamic rural economy, are still open questions. Yet, the essential answers are known to us, if only we have the faith and the integrity of purpose to see them through.

Our Five-Year Plans, on which we laid much store, gave fairly competent attention to the medium-term and the long-term, but left the short-term to the devices of the moment. Specially, since the early sixties, at each step, planning has been overtaken by events. The gap between the short-term and the long-term, combined with too little attention to timing and the precise mechanisms of change, has diminished the positive gains from planning. It would not be too much to say that, in recent years, the externals of planning have continued, but the substance has greatly weakened. There is no inherent justification for this degree of failure. Modifications called for by the external economic developments of the past year can be reflected appropriately

within the scheme of planning itself.

Finally, it is now apparent that, as an instrument of social change, parliamentary democracy, pursued mainly on partisan lines, may well become a self-defeating enterprise. Representative institutions and open democracy can solve the problems of the people only if there is a large measure of consensus at the national level on the more fundamental issues of political direction and economic and social change. Without this, much of our energy will run to waste, as is now happening on an extraordinarily large scale. In Nehru's day, there was reason for greater hope on this score, a hope that must be raised once again in the total national interest.

#### NEW PRIORITIES

Events since the early sixties have highlighted the various complexities which have been briefly mentioned above. In their underlying features, the issues which have come to the fore are by no means new. They were inherent in our own political and economic choices. Vigilant implementation was always an indispensable condition for success. From the beginning, a continuing gap between declarations of intent and practical action has marred many of our most significant policies. The break in the continuity of planning which occurred in 1966-67, and the loss of momentum which followed, accentuated this gap in several critical fields. It would be true to say that the present economic and social situation is a product of factors which go beyond planning. In resolving it, however, wise management of the economy at this point of time could make a vital contribution. In particular, a lesson from Nehru's own example is that each economic phase, whether favourable or otherwise, should be dealt with, not in isolation, but as a link in the chain which binds the past with the future.

It is obvious that the current economic situation calls for a range of short-term measures and policies quite apart from future investment plans. Some of the more extreme manifestations have to be corrected, whatever the shape of the next plan. However, lasting solutions would require longer-term measures of investment and reorganization.

In emphasising continuity in planning, Nehru always recognized that new conditions would call for new forms of action. He

saw change and continuity as two sides of the same coin. He would have been the first to see that the sequence of events which has led to the setbacks of the past two or three years in agriculture indicates also a new set of national priorities. It is clear that, in the next phase of development, while exploiting the possibilities of industrial and technological growth to the maximum, the true core of national planning lies in agriculture, in human resources development, employment and education, and in the restructuring and deepening of the rural economy.

#### SEARCH FOR A LARGER UNITY

At the present juncture, Nehru's thought on planning bears directly on the political assumptions of economic development under the conditions of a socially oriented, mixed, market economy. Notwithstanding divisions of opinion natural to a multi-party political system, Nehru strove for a common base of moral, intellectual and political support for the more critical decisions in planning. In this he had a considerable measure of success, as much in the substance of change, as by the manner in which he sought the cooperation of diverse groups and parties. His approach was one of national interest, as befitted a nation-builder. Planning is nation-building, whatever the political system. If a renewed effort could be made once again, it is possible even now to strengthen and enlarge Nehru's main propositions on planning so as to incorporate the experiences of the past decade and to build stronger defences against future failure. In their essence, his propositions can still serve as keystones of a new upsurge of constructive effort at the level of the people and on the part of the administrations at the Centre and the States as well as in Panchayati Raj and other local institutions.

For Nehru, power was ever a means, never an end. This is a difficult ideal even in good times, but he worked for it, as best he could. Even at the helm of affairs, Nehru sensed the limitations of power, and its utter transitoriness. As he put it, it is only power with wisdom that is good. In his Azad Memorial Lectures in 1959, he recalled Ashoka's words and added:

"We might well follow Ashoka's advice in dealing with people who differ from us in politics or economics. There was no place for the cold war in Ashoka's mind. There need be none today."

Such were the values through which Nehru succeeded in lifting planning above itself. Long after we cease to look to his specific formulations, which belong to his own period, Nehru's personal dedication and compassion and the goals he held supreme will remain a cherished possession and a source of strength in building a better India and a better world.



**SOME ADDRESSES OF  
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU  
ON PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**





## **ADMINISTRATION—A HUMAN PROBLEM**

**(From the Address delivered at the Inaugural  
Meeting of Indian Institute of Public  
Administration on 29th March, 1954.)**

“... Administration like most things is, in the final analysis, a human problem—to deal with human beings, not with some statistical data. Statistical data helps in understanding. But there is the danger that pure administrators at the top—not so much at the bottom, because they come into contact with human beings—may come to regard human beings as mere abstractions. There is that danger at times in both types of society, whether it is what might be called capitalist society or communist society.

“The communist talks a tremendous deal about the masses, the toiling masses. The toiling masses become some abstract apart from the human beings in them. He may decide something on pure theory, which may lead to tremendous suffering to those toiling masses. So also the other administrator functions in a different, *i.e.*, capitalist society. The administrator may think in abstract of the people he deals with, come to conclusions which are justifiable apparently, but which miss the human element. After all, whatever department of Government you deal with, it is ultimately a problem of human beings, and the moment we forget them, we are driven away from reality.

“... Administration is meant to achieve something, and not to exist in some kind of an ivory tower, following certain rules of procedure and, narcissus-like, looking on itself with complete satisfaction. The test after all is the human beings and their welfare”.



## FIRST ANNUAL GENERAL BODY MEETING\*

(April 1, 1955)

Addressing the members present, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru stated that he was very much attracted by the advice given by Mr. Paul H. Appleby in his article† entitled 'Thinking Big' published in the first issue of the *Indian Journal of Public Administration*—the Institute's quarterly organ. He agreed with Mr. Appleby that the great task of the execution of India's development plans called for a more progressive and realistic attitude on the part of the administration. With the advent of the atomic age, the political, economic and social policies of the country had to be refashioned entirely in new terms. The introduction of atomic weapons in the political field was threatening the very foundations of civilisation and a fundamental change in political values had become imperative. Similarly, with the use of atomic energy in other fields, the traditional methods would become out of date. A new kind of industrial revolution was in the making—a revolution which required the administration to keep pace with the times, to re-evaluate administrative methods and practices and to adapt them to the needs of the changed circumstances. A continuing awareness of the new problems and persistent efforts to solve them were a necessary price of survival. Methods and operations followed fifty years ago were no longer suitable. This was amply illustrated by the increasing emphasis on 'physical planning' in India's development schemes. What was required was a realistic

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\* Report of Jawaharlal Nehru's Speech.

† See Appendix.

faith in India's future, a genuine belief in the value of national objectives, a determination to go ahead, and a willingness and capacity to take risks—big risks, but not, of course, foolish risks.



## A WORD TO THE SERVICES\*

"I do not usually have the opportunity of addressing the Services as such, except sometimes in our rather narrow circle of Delhi. I am rather glad, therefore, that during my brief visit to Kurnool, this engagement has been made for me. The Governor just spoke about the essential part that the Services play at any time but most specially at a time when the country is trying to advance rapidly according to some planned method and advancing towards a socialistic structure of society. Now, what exactly are the Services? What is their purpose? We have to be clear about that. The Services, as their name implies, are supposed to serve, obviously. Serve whom?—society, the people, the country. Why I say this is, because the test always has to be how far the Services, whether as a whole or any individual members of them, are serving the larger causes that society has, that the nation has.

"In the past a great deal of attention was paid to what might be called Service Rules and Regulations. Complicated rules running into thick volumes were made for them. Now, rules are quite right. There should be rules; there should be certainty as to what happens under a certain set of circumstances. The individuals serving should have security and should not be dealt with autocratically or spasmodically just as somebody wants to. That is all right. Nevertheless, it is going rather beyond that mark, when the whole Governmental structure, you might say, turns round the Services. Why was this so? This was so, because

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\*A speech delivered on December 9, 1955 to an audience of public servants at Kurnool.

in the old days, really, the Governmental structure *was* the higher or the superior services. That was the Government, from top to bottom.

"The old Indian Civil Service and other senior Services were the people who laid down the policy in India and therefore were the highest authority in India, apart from some distant authority in England. The Services that were built up in those days in India were very competent Services; the senior Services were fairly efficient Services. But there were two things about it. *First of all*, they served naturally the larger policies which were determined by the British Government. They had to. That was the final authority. *Secondly*, being a service structure they thought of the good of India rather in the terms of the good of their own kind, which was not obviously always the same. It was rather the approach to the question, a mentality. Now that of course has changed and has to change for a variety of reasons. First, the country is independent. There is no British authority and no attempt by a foreign authority to impose its own wishes. Secondly, we have what is called a democratic structure where the final authority are the people of India who from time to time elect their representatives in Parliaments and Assemblies and the majority parties in those Assemblies form the Governments. Now those Governments inevitably have to be responsive to public opinion. Therefore, the final authority, that is the public, becomes the arbiter. Naturally the public does not consider every problem, every detail; it can't; it can only approve the broadest policies. Therefore, the whole structure of Government in India has changed from rather an autocratic structure to a democratic structure—a structure which was based on some outside authority to a structure which is based on an authority not only within the country but ultimately responsible to the people of the country. That is a basic change. Together with that, other changes have come. That is to say, the State now thinks much more about social and economic problems. The State has become a dynamic State—not a static State. Of course, no individual or no State is ever completely static. It can't be. If anything is completely static, it is dead. Only death puts an end to all movement. But broadly speaking, the previous State was a static State. It changed gradually. The present State has to be a dynamic State because of a large number of forces at work apart

from our own desire to make up for the lost time and to build a new India. So our outlook becomes less and less purely political and more and more social and economic. Political, of course, to some extent, it has to be. But the importance of the political element becomes less and less. It is the growth of a country, it is the growth of a social group, if that group begins to think more on economic and social lines and less on political lines. It is the measure of the growth of India today that we are thinking more and more on economic and social lines of 5-year plans, schemes of development, and others, rather than purely political questions. Now if all these great changes have taken place in India, and are continually taking place, obviously the Services have to adapt themselves to them; have to adopt methods to the changed *conditions* of work and the changed *objectives* of work.

"Work for the Services has grown greatly in India. It is very difficult for me to say how much work has grown, let us say, in the Delhi Central Secretariat. But a senior Civil Servant was telling me that it was hundred times more than previously. I think that was an exaggeration (Laughter). But it is a fact that it has grown tremendously. That is to say in two ways: One is, there are entirely *new* types of work which we have to do and which we didn't do before. Let us take our Foreign Office. It is a new thing entirely. There was no Foreign Office previously. Now it is an enormous establishment, thousands of people serving abroad, hundreds here, vast number of various grades of people serving in the office, learning foreign languages, school of foreign languages, all kinds of things and it goes on growing. We cannot stop it growing. Because, as an independent country, we have to deal with other independent countries. We can't ask somebody else to deal on our behalf. That is a sign of dependence.

"Then take again, this—of course it is in a sense temporary but we have to face it—our Ministry of Rehabilitation in Delhi has to deal with 8 and 9 million people who came as refugees from Pakistan and to rehabilitate them. It has to deal with millions of little and big houses left by the evacuees. It is a huge organisation spread out over various parts of India, looking after large properties, what is called evacuee property. It has started schools and colleges, all kinds of factories for the refugees. It is a Government in itself—the Ministry of Rehabilitation dealing with 8 million people. I have given you two examples. I can give you,

of course, any number. Our Scientific Departments have grown tremendously. Our Ministry of Commerce and Industry has grown very greatly. There is a new Ministry of Production, there is a new Ministry of Planning and so on. Our Ministry of Health functions in a bigger way, our Ministry of Education functions in a much bigger way, every Ministry functions in a very much bigger way and many new Ministries have come into being. Take Defence. Previously Defence was really an organisation here to carry out the basic policies laid down in London—just to give effect to them. Now we grow. We have to lay down our policies. We have to develop not only the outer structure of defence but the industrial apparatus behind defence. The Defence Ministry today owns great industries all over, just like a number of other Ministries. The Communications Ministry owns great factories making telephones and what not. The Railway Ministry owns Chittaranjan Locomotive Works and the Integral Coach Building Factory near Madras. You see how all this goes on growing. It is an enormous growth. People do not realise it. I cannot say that every body in Government service is hard-worked. But I do know that large number of people in Delhi, especially senior people dealing with responsible work, are very hard-worked. I know in my Ministry of External Affairs we start early in the morning and we don't come home till 7 or 8 in the evening. It is an all-day effort and usually one has to work late at night also dealing with important problems. So there is this tremendous increase of work; secondly, the *nature* of work has changed. It is much more responsible work. It is not carrying out orders merely, but much more responsible work. Thirdly, the work has become more and more *social*. The planning, the whole planning machinery, the Planning Commission, is *new*—with its big structure behind it. So you see how both the *quantity* and the *quality* of our work have changed and the *direction* in which it goes has changed.

“Further, there has been a very big change—progressive change in the relationship existing between the Services and the people. Now in the old days the Services were a class apart from the people depending on the goodwill of the British Government and they were not dependent, of course, on popular goodwill; and in fact, you might say that the public interest and the Services' interests were not identical always, though sometimes of course



they were.

"In the case of some Services, let us take the Police for instance, the average reaction of the public was hostile to the Police. The poor policeman had to deal with difficult problems. Sometimes a policeman may have misbehaved but even if he behaved well the public reaction was hostile because it was hostile to the Police as such. The Police came in conflict with the public. All those things become completely wrong under present conditions. From the side of the Police there should be the realisation that they always not only serve the people but seek their cooperation. From the side of the public there should be this notion that these people, the police force as a whole is serving us... A police force is essential in a country, it is absolutely necessary, and we should utilise its services and help them and cooperate with them in the detection of crime or anything evil that happens. I think that the relationship of the Police and the public in the last 5 or 6 years has changed greatly. The tension between the two, the dislike of each other is much less than it was. It has not gone completely yet and sometimes it is possible that over some matters people get excited or are excited. But we must realise the basic fact that any one can misbehave. It is obvious whether he is a policeman, or a member of the public or member of any profession—an individual may misbehave and misbehaviour should be dealt with, should be punished. But to consider the Police as a whole as something evil is just childish nonsense. It is absurd. Because, it does not matter what Government there may be, they are bound to have a police force, an efficient and loyal police force; otherwise, it is no good. Therefore, we have to change our old attitudes and develop new attitudes.

"Basically the attitude has to be, I repeat, as between the Services whatever they are—whether they are civil or military or police or anything else, it has to be one of active cooperation with the public, of active service to the public and on the public side also the attitude of welcoming that cooperation and giving their cooperation too. In fact, the so-called barrier, the so-called dividing line which in the past divided the officials and non-officials should cease to be. We still use these words 'official' and 'non-official'. They have ceased to have any meaning today. What am I? Am I an official or non-official? (Laughter). I do not know. I have been now for 8 or 9 years in the Government of

India, obviously in an official capacity. Therefore, I am an official (Laughter). On the other hand, because I am not a member of any permanent or impermanent service (Laughter), I am a non-official (Laughter). Really, these lines have no meaning now except for some statistical data somebody is compiling, and these lines should go. That is, in effect, there should be a blurring over when they meet; the official must feel more and more as a non-official and the non-official should feel not as an official exactly (Laughter) but as one who is working in partnership with the official people for the same objects. Now this kind of thing, you can observe this happening today, in the Community Projects, in the National Extension Scheme where the whole essence of that project, and the success of the project, depends on how far the officials connected with it function as non-officials and how far they can draw out the cooperation of the non-official elements of the people or the villagers or anybody. If the official who is in charge cannot do that, it just does not matter how clever or able he is, he is not suitable to that task. The test is his capacity to draw out people, draw out the cooperation of the people in the village wherever he is working. That of course applies to every official, but more so in planning, more so in constructive and development work because there is something that has got to be done not merely in the routine way but in the creative way. So the whole outlook of official and non-official has to change.

"We talk nowadays about a socialistic structure of society. Obviously that structure cannot take place, cannot develop, just by some legislation, although legislation helps. But it really means building up a complex society. Society is very complicated with innumerable relations. Socialism is not a law. It is a structure governing production, distribution, mutual relationships, transport, everything. Now, that takes time. It just cannot be done by a resolution or by a decree. It may take less time or it may take more time. But first of all one should be clear in which direction one is going. If we are going in the right direction it is all well. We can speed up our process. Speeding it too much sometimes really results in delay. That is to say, if you try to speed it up too much the structure may crack and the cracking of a structure means delay. You have to mend; you have to do something. Therefore, you will find that even in the biggest

revolutions—or so-called revolutions—that have occurred, it has taken years and decades to build up the new society. The revolution did not build up. The revolution only removed obstacles to the building up. That is the most it could do. If an autocratic monarch is the obstacle we remove him. If something else is an obstacle that is removed. Having done that, then comes the slow laborious process of building up a new society.

“Let us take Russia, the Soviet Union. A great revolution took place there 38 years ago. We look at the picture now and we see great achievements there. We like some things and we do not like some things,—but that is neither here nor there. I am merely talking about the achievements. We see considerable achievements there in 38 years. If you go back you will find that the first ten years or more were not spent in building up but in struggling out of the morass of a revolution and civil war. It took these 10 to 12 years just getting out of the problems which had followed the revolution and gradually, then, they started their first five year plan, I think about 15 years after the revolution. Now they have their 5th or 6th five year plan. I was telling our Russian guests the other day that they had got 30 years start of us. Exactly 30 years. Their revolution came in 1917. The change-over in our country, our Independence, came in 1947, just 30 years after. I said, ‘You have got 30 years start of us but we hope to catch up in our own way’.

“Now, therefore, the Services must gradually cease to think of themselves as some select coterie apart from the rest of the people. They must think of themselves as part of the people of India cooperating in this great adventure of building up India. Of course, whatever your Services may be, you have your service problems; certainly you should consider your own service problems, deal with them in a cooperative way. That is a different matter. But let not your service problems overwhelm your mind and make you forget what your major task is. The Services are not meant for the sake of the Services—they are not meant only to provide employment to people. They do provide employment; of course, they should. But they are meant to get a job done—not just employment—to get something done. If you are not doing that something, then you are not serving your purpose. You are functionless, though you may be drawing a salary (Laughter). Therefore, you have to look at how to get that job

done. Of course, there are many other considerations which come in. For instance, we have a problem on the one hand of enlarging the scope of employment widely—there is plenty of unemployment in the country. On the other hand, we have the difficulty in many offices that there are far too many people—a nuisance. Such numbers bring down efficiency. It is probably better for us to pension them off—and let others do the work. It is better to pension off people and give them something adequate so that they may not just come in, encumber, and get in the way of the work of others. Of course, all these are temporary problems. That is to say, as our social, industrial and other work increases in scope it will go on absorbing more and more people till ultimately we hope that there will be no unemployment or, if there is, it will be what is called fractional unemployment of a few people for a short time. But, in the meanwhile, we have to pass through this difficult period of transition. Inevitably in this difficult period, there are maladjustments and many people unfortunately suffer. We should try to reduce and to lessen that. But one cannot avoid it. It is just beyond our power to prevent all that happening. We have to go through the hard way. Every country has. If you consider these countries where there have been great revolutions, you will remember that the amount of suffering that occurred in those countries was something tremendous. They may have achieved—they *have* achieved—many good things in their advance, but it was at a terrific cost and we try as far as possible to avoid that cost. We try to advance peacefully to avoid the tremendous cost and suffering of conflict and violence. But some cost has to be paid in social change. If we change the land systems of India as we have been changing them, inevitably, the people who had vested interests suffer. We do not want them to suffer. It is not our desire. But they have to suffer because they come in the way of the mass of the people.

“Now another thing: in the old days our Services were graded in various ways—even now they are graded, I believe. They were the all-India Services, Senior and Junior, Grades 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, etc. Now obviously, in any kind of work there are different types of work, and some work requiring highest responsibility. Take the army. It is no good my saying that our Commander-in-Chief and the private in the army should be put on the same level,

and made to do the same work. They *are* different types of work. The private in the army—the soldier—is a very fine soldier, it is true. But I can't ask him to command an army. He has not got the knowledge and experience or ability to do it. He can't do it. So, as in the military, it applies to other jobs, too. Take a big engineering job. I want an absolutely first class engineer and it makes no difference to me whether another man with 20 or 30 or more years is very senior. If another man is a first class engineer that other man will be given the job and not the man of seniority. It is quite clear, because we want to get the good men. If I cannot get a good enough man in India I will have to import him from Germany, Japan, or Russia or America because I want a man who can do the job. Fortunately, we have got plenty of very good engineers. But still, sometimes we have had to import men with great experience for the big jobs. In the next stage, I do not think it will be necessary for us to get any engineers from abroad because our engineers are so good and they have got the experience now even for the biggest jobs. But what I am saying is: one must distinguish.

“In the British times there was very much of what might be called the caste system in the Services; the British, of course, being the topmost caste of all. That is, there were rigid lines of distinction between various grades of Services and nobody could cross that barrier as a rule, though very rarely one might. The first barrier originally was between the British and the Indians. Then a few Indians were allowed to creep into the British region and gradually that grew. But even in the lower ranks, as you know, there was this caste system in the Services and the various grades of Services. Now, that is a particularly bad thing. There is one thing that is quite essential; that is that according to function, according to the quality of work, one has to put a man in charge who has the capacity to do that job, and who has the training and experience to do it. Naturally he will have greater responsibility but that does not mean that, as a human being, he is superior to another human being. That does not mean that he belongs to a higher caste than another — Service caste I mean and not the other;—the other is bad enough, but to bring it into the Services is worse.

“So we have to get rid of this feeling of ‘casteism’ in Services and that again, I will repeat, does not mean that we should put

stupid people in charge of responsible work. All our work will suffer. We have to keep up standards. Our standards generally, speaking, by and large, are fairly good compared to any service standards and administrative standards in other countries. They are quite good. We want them to be better still. In some places there has been a tendency for them to go down, largely because of this excess of work, suddenly vast numbers of new people coming in without experience, without those standards and other things. But it is quite essential that standards of work, and standards of integrity should be kept up, because without them naturally one cannot go ahead fast and all our work becomes tainted work and there is a feeling that it also results ultimately in a lack of faith in the Services on the part of the people, which is a bad thing. We must have faith. In the Services, like in any other groups, there are good people, and bad people; there are dishonest people and honest people—every type. Now that means that where there is a dishonest person, where there is an inefficient or incapable person, one should deal with that individual as such; one should not blame the whole Service. One should not blame the whole community and say that it is bad because one individual or two or ten are bad. We should deal with individuals. For the rest, it becomes the duty of every person for his own sake, for the sake of the Service and if you like, for the sake of the country, to maintain certain high standards of work, of efficiency, of probity and integrity; thereby, ultimately, he gains too, as well as others.

“As I told you our work becomes more and more social and economic. The person who is becoming more and more important today is the engineer, the technical man, the scientist. In the old days, the person who was most important was the administrator. Now I do not mean to say that the administrator has become less important. Of course, he is important. He has to deal with human beings. He must be a man with experience and judgment and all that. But the fact remains that the other types of specialised workers like the engineers and the scientists are becoming more and more important. It may be that you can get an administrator relatively easily; it is very difficult to get an absolutely first class engineer or a first class scientist. He is rare like every high class specialist is rare. There is a tendency, again derived from the British days, of treating the administrator at the top as

far superior to a person engaged in any other occupation like engineering, science or education or anything. That is not a good tendency. Because, today our country is becoming more and more technical minded. That is a sign of progress. We are going to turn out more and more engineers, educationists, scientists and the like and the future of the country is going to depend, I might say, more on scientists and engineers than probably on administrators. Of course, it is rather difficult to distinguish and say that it should depend more on this, or more on that, because the future of a country like India or any country depends on a multitude of activities, on a multitude of specialists, experts, experienced men, men of wisdom and the coordination of all these activities which results in the particular work that we are doing.

“We are getting out of our old rather simple agricultural civilisation, which has its virtue. Undoubtedly the simple agricultural civilisation had a certain virtue and it had of course many failings. But any how, it was a civilisation of poverty, it was a civilisation of scarcity, it was a civilisation of cooperative effort in the village working together with many good points. But we just cannot have that because we want to get out of this rut of poverty; our population increases fast. That again reduces our levels, unless we produce more. So today we are entering the industrial age, the scientific age, the technical age, where the scientist and the technician and the technologist and the engineer play a vital role in our society. Today we find some difficulty in finding employment for thousands and thousands of our young men or women who become B.As. There is no difficulty in finding employment for 10 thousand overseers today if you produce them. That is the difference that is taking place in India. We have a technical institute at Kharagpur. Every person who is trained there, before he leaves the institute, has got a job. There is a demand for trained technical people, while every person, you know very well, who leaves the college as a B.A. does not get a job today. It shows that the education of the college is not quite fitting in with the new technical requirements of the present day. Of course, vast numbers of people are now being trained technically in India; much larger number than previously, and in various ways, grades of training, so that the whole character of our Services is changing now. They will change in the course of next 5 or 10

years. Our Services will become more and more technical services. Even the administrative jobs will gradually be occupied by technical-minded and technically-trained people and that will be a sign of advance again.

"So we are living in this dynamic age in India. India today is a dynamic country, and we have to be wide awake. Now, one fault of what has been, in the past, normally, called 'service mentality' is that it largely sticks to certain routine and it is not to that extent a dynamic mentality. It is rather a static one. I am not referring, of course, to individuals; but any profession, any group of human beings working along precedents, tends to become static. Nobody is more static than the lawyer. He is always working on some precedent of a law court laid down previously, (Laughter) and producing rulings and the rest. That is the static mentality. And the service man also tends to get a static mentality because he goes according to precedent.

"In every country, in every people, there are two types of forces at work. One is what might be called continuity, continuing traditions, continuing habits, continuing structures of society, continuing beliefs, and the like. That is a powerful cement which holds society together. We in India have this sense of continuity in a very powerful degree and that is what had made us function together for the last thousands of years. The other force is that of change which is the reverse of continuity and it is equally essential or more essential because, as I said some little while ago, anything that has ceased to change completely is dead. It is only death that stops change. Everything that is living, whether an individual or a social group, or a nation, if it is alive, is constantly changing. It may be changing slowly or it may be changing fast. When you have a big revolution, that revolution means a sudden break with the past, the tremendous break cracks up and then you start the change. But you will find soon after the revolution how the old past creeps in again and the people who come later in the revolution link themselves up with the old past. Look at the French Revolution. A tremendous affair in its time and yet 10 or 20 years later, France went back to a large extent to its old habits, although some of the gains of the revolution and land reforms, etc., were kept. Take other revolutions. It is surprising how after a major revolution the old sense of continuity creeps in. The old sense of continuity is represented largely



or in a way by, shall I say, *nationalism*. Take the Soviet Union. It has been a tremendous revolution upsetting everything, and the changes of the revolution subsist undoubtedly in many ways. Yet Russia has during the last few years become very nationalistic. The old heroes of Russia of 500 years ago are the present Russia's heroes again.

"So you see how these two processes of continuity and change which are really contradictory to each other function. Sometimes, too much continuity will become static, will become weak and there will be no progress. Too much change may shake up and break up the structure completely and then you have to pick up the threads of continuity again. So that, one has to balance change and continuity. If there is a peaceful process of change, the balancing becomes easier, provided it does not become too slow. Then, of course, if it becomes too slow the other factors come in which tend to upset the balance. Anyhow, this wider question of change and continuity in all our nation's life or any nation's life might be considered from the very much narrower point of view of the Services. You have to keep both, a sense of continuity and a sense of change to adapt yourself to present conditions.

"Above all, finally, the Services—whether they are all-India Services, whether they are State Services—have to remember that the basic need in India without which no great thing can be done at all is the building up of the unity of India. That is quite essential and I want you to realise that. You all talk about it of course, but I want you to realise it in all its importance and essential nature. Whatever we have achieved in the past 30 or 40 years in our struggle, and in the last 8 years of our Independence has been because, in a large measure, we have pulled together in India in spite of fissiparous tendencies and forces which disrupt. I think every member of the Services, whatever his service may be, must understand and appreciate this, must understand that it is his duty to work for the unity of India, to break down barriers which come in the way of the unity of India and always be a crusader in that behalf.

"Here, coming back to Kurnool after two years and looking back at things generally, we have had plenty of reports of what is being done in this and other States—I am happy to see not only the actual evidence of progress which one sees but much more

so, by the atmosphere that I find here—a progressive, a self-confident atmosphere of achievement and of going ahead (applause). So, I congratulate you all upon it and wish you prosperity for the future.”



## **SECOND ANNUAL GENERAL BODY MEETING**

### **(April 7, 1956)**

"Friends, for the third time you have elected me as your President. For the third time I have come to this hall to preside over this function, and in between I have done nothing in regard to this organisation. When I come here I try rapidly to find out through the report and from other papers as to what this organisation has been doing—of course from the speeches that are made here also I try to make out what this organisation has been doing. So, I am hardly a suitable person to criticise or to offer any worthwhile suggestions. Nevertheless, since I am here, let me put my ideas before you. They are not very remarkable ones and I have no doubt you have already thought about them.

"Mr. Bapat spoke about the vast range of activities of Government today. The range continues to widen and deepen. How far an administrative structure, which was meant to deal with a much narrower range of activities can deal with this vast range, including all kinds of expert, specialised, technical and managerial functions is a matter which is also coming to the fore. Obviously, the range of activities before us is infinitely wider than before. The methods of choosing people for services are still the old methods of choosing them for what may be called broadly the general administrative service and not for any specialised branch of service that we have today and that we are likely to have more and more in the future.

"I have often been troubled by the problem of having to deal with a situation where the administrative machinery works rather in a rigid framework which cannot automatically expand. How

are we going to deal with this new situation? The administrative aspect is always important, but it is only in a very backward State that only the administrative aspect is looked after. In all States or countries, other aspects become equally important and they might even become more important than the administrative aspect. How are we to deal with that problem? How are we to deal with it now? It is obvious that the biggest problem that we have to face is the trained personnel for the future expansion of the State's activities in various directions. This is a problem which is continually troubling my colleague, Mr. V. T. Krishnamachari and others in the Planning Commission. He wants, of course, engineers, scientists, and other technicians in many fields and we can perhaps make some kind of an estimate of our requirements, bulk requirements, though not easily. I think our demands are likely to be so great that we are always likely to fall short, and there it is better to think in big terms rather than in small terms.

"Then there is another aspect, that of the future development of State organisations, State-controlled industries, factories, etc. Of course, it may be hoped that a good administrative officer may go and manage any of these as their head. In fact, in some countries, the opposite process is at work, that is, opposed to the position where the administrator goes as the head of an industrial or technical organisation. It is coming to be believed more and more that the administrative head of a technical organisation should himself be a technician, or at least should know a good deal about the techniques operated there. We see, in some countries, that technical people come in as administrators, as heads of purely administrative concerns. In some countries they—technicians—come into the diplomatic service because the whole background is technical. The technician comes in as ambassador; he becomes a Minister because the background of the country is becoming progressively governed by the technological advances.

"Certainly our background is not that; it is more or less administrative. It is good so far as it goes, but is it likely to be adequate for the changing conditions? Are we prepared for tomorrow? If we are not, then we shall have the biggest bottleneck that you can imagine—money thrown in building huge factories, industrial concerns, State corporations and the like and not finding proper persons for running them—proper persons not

only because of their competence and experience but, if I may say so, a certain enthusiasm for the work and a certain kinship and spirit with the idea of the State doing it. It is no good if a person says: 'I am doing it, though I basically disagree with the idea of the State running these concerns'; because that does not fit in, even though as a technician he may fit in. Therefore, it is of high importance that we should train people, a special class of personnel for this kind of managerial appointments in State corporations, undertakings, etc. We may, of course, draw upon the private sector or other sectors. But the point is that, even if we draw upon the private sector, the men from it must develop a public conscience and not private conscience. Only then will they fit in. I think that this is one of the most important things that we have to consider. We are on the eve of a big industrial change, in a sense. Industrial revolution in India is a fact and we have to keep pace in all directions. That is the first point.

## II

"Secondly, even in thinking purely of administration, here is something which is quite beyond my understanding. It is so complicated—various departments, traditions, this and that. I confess I have not understood it at all; I feel lost in it. Once or twice, I had an occasion to look at the civil service rules and the like. I was astonished how the Government of India had continued to exist so long with these rules. It should have collapsed under them. In spite of the impediments that the rules put before it, it is a wonder how it has survived. There are three or four volumes with thousands of slips and the like. Only some selected high pandits understand them. That is bad.

"But what is worse is that these rules were framed—I do not know but I imagine—some 50 years back or 40 or 30 or 20 years; they are in their present form hardly less than 20 years old. They are not only pre-Independence but pre-many things. Even without looking at them, I cannot conceive that these rules, framed 20-40 years ago, can be made wholly applicable today. There is, first of all, a big political change. India has become an independent country. Secondly, apart from any political change, I doubt if, even in countries like the U.K., 30 or 40 years old rules are still applicable. I imagine that many things have changed

there from time to time. We have been much more static in this respect. The whole background has changed and a new approach has to be made to this problem. If we have to deal with the rules framed not only in the pre-Independence days but long ago, in the remote antiquity, one might say, politically speaking, that we are bound hand and foot by something which has no place or relevance today. There may be some rules which are still relevant but the whole outlook or frame is different; the circumstances are different.

### III

“Thirdly—this is a major factor—we have, rightly or fairly rightly, developed into a State with not only a social outlook but with a social programme which the State undertakes. We have the objective of socialism or the socialist pattern. Now, every machine that you make is meant to turn out something you want. If we want socialism, then the administrative machinery that we have must gradually turn out socialism. If it is turning out something else, then, it does not fit in with the objective we have and there is a constant conflict between these two. I am not referring to the individual; I am referring to the pattern of the organisation right from the recruitment, etc., promotion, and all that.

“There are some factors, which, no doubt, have to be common for any efficient system of administration, whatever the objective may be. But there are some factors which are likely to be different. It is just that any decent person you choose may fit into a particular job; he may not fit in well with another job. Take a Vice-Chancellor of a University or a manager of a steel plant, for instance. As a Vice-Chancellor, he may be an excellent person but, as the manager of a steel plant, he may be hopeless; it may be *vice versa*. Therefore, the same person who may be very good in an administrative machine, meant to produce something, may not be good at all for another purpose when the machine is supposed to produce something quite different.

“Therefore, we have to view what is the ideal or the objective of the State. Where do we want to go? What kind of a factory or society are we working for? There we come up to the objective aimed at.

## IV

"An equally important thing is the long-term or perspective planning—not mere planning for five years. What are we thinking of 15 years hence or 20 years hence? I do not mean to say that you should consider the process of running a factory, or think what our people would be like, 20 years hence. Of course, that is there but I mean to say that, in spite of our ideals and objectives, our general approach has been pragmatic. We have got no fixed pattern and we are prepared to learn by our experiences and efforts. Therefore we do not have a 20 years' picture which can be called rigid; but we have some picture. Therefore, even in preparing the administrator of tomorrow or the administrator of 10 years later, we have got to keep that broad picture in view. All this is important at any time, but it becomes much more important when the tempo of change is rather fast as it is progressively getting in India and, as I said, will be even more so in our country later. Therefore, this is a very important consideration for you.

"In other countries—I suppose in some other countries—the tempo of change is much faster than ours. Take the United States of America which is conditioned more and more by the technological changes. There the Government changes continuously, for good or bad as it may be. A tremendous change is going on technologically, rather frightening change; frightening in the sense how far that may affect the human being; how far the machine will dominate the mere human being and how far the human being will keep himself in command of the machine. It is rather frightening. Whether frightening or not, those changes are there and they will come elsewhere too. Therefore, let us get to understand them.

"My point is that all our outlook has to be from a wide viewpoint of constantly trying to understand this changing world of ours. I was just reading a book yesterday by a very eminent historian: *History in a Changing World*. In fact, the whole conception of history has changed now. All eminent historians in the past—very eminent and very modern as they were—are out of date. The whole of warfare has completely changed. Every book written from the ancient days to the last war is out of date with the coming of the atom bomb and the hydrogen bomb. The

whole conception of the physical world has changed by the development of physics. In every department of life you will see how the basic conceptions are changing and we are well on the threshold of unknown regions of mind.

"If all this is happening around us, obviously, the texture of human life is changing. If that changes, obviously all this business of administration will necessarily be affected. Administration is not static; it is a changing, dynamic, revolutionary process to fit in with the changing times. It is in that spirit that you should approach this question and, naturally, study the peculiar conditions and problems that we have before us.

"Now, that leads me to another line of thought. I said: 'peculiar problems we have before us'. More and more I come to the conclusion that, while we must make every effort to learn from the great advances made in other countries in every field, and more especially in scientific and technological field—in every field nevertheless—we shall have to strike our own path. We shall have to find our own path guided by other people's advice and wisdom, but not blindly following any either.

"All the books on Economics written in America, England, Russia or China may help us, but will not suit us in the final analysis because we have got to take the conditions of our country. And with the help of others, no doubt, find out, first of all, what our problems are and then seek their solution. Of course, we are doing that. It will not do if we were to get hold of some problem in some other country and may be, a solution of another country and try to apply it to the problem here, which may be different.

## V

"Now, coming to a more limited approach to this problem of administration, I was thinking, as I was sitting here, how in the early days of the industrial revolution great inventions did not come from the people at the top. Very few of these came from people at the top. They came from ordinary mechanics working in those rather primitive factories some 150 years ago. They came from the overseers, mechanics and others. Every big invention in the early days of the industrial revolution came from somebody rather low down in the scheme of things; some mistry or a mechanic who dealt with things by his hands and not thinking about things



in his head. Even subsequently, although we have had naturally great inventors, great scientists, Edisons and Einsteins, it is astonishing how science has progressed, how technology has progressed by the innumerable small conclusions of unknown persons and not by the giants of sciences. Especially, technology progressed by the conclusions of the mechanics. They find out something in their daily work and their suggestions are adopted.

“Though this is not entirely applicable to the administrative apparatus, there is no reason why it should not apply to it to some extent. That is to say, do we ever consult or make an effort to get ideas from the people lower down in the scale of the administrative apparatus? Do we ever care to know what they think about their own work? Do we ever find out from the third grade, the fourth grade—I do not know what all grades are there—or the clerks if they have any suggestions for their own work? I think it would be very profitable if we ask them to suggest improvements. Of course, 90 per cent of the suggestions may not be good; that does not matter. But, even if one or two are good, they are worthwhile. That has a double purpose in view. One is that we might get good suggestions from the persons who are actually doing the job. The second is that you will make them have a sense of partnership, much more than they do at present. They are being consulted, treated as equals in the matter of getting suggestions even though they may be inferior in grade.

“How can this be done? I think it will be a good thing to ask them sometimes to meet together in their own rooms, discuss things and make suggestions for the improvement of their own work, to have better efficiency and less wastage. Whatever the procedure may be, the main purpose of that would be really to give them a sense of partnership in their work and to take away something that I consider very harmful and which still persists; that is, the sense of caste in our Services—the superior service, the second grade, the third grade and so on.

“Naturally, there have to be grades in the sense of higher responsibility, etc. Men with greater experience and intelligence may be placed in the higher grade. But, do not convert that higher grade into a higher caste. It is bad in every way, but, we in India, who are confirmed practitioners of the caste system, bring in this caste system wherever there is the slightest loophole for it. You must change it. Therefore, I would beg of you to view this

problem so as to eliminate this caste system in the services. To talk about caste in our services, about the superior services thinking themselves not merely to be equipped with the experience and intelligence, but belonging to a higher order of human beings, is a bad thing; especially it is a very bad thing in a democratic set-up.

"Somebody here referred to contacts with the public. There again, it is important that we should get rid of some of the old practices and evolve a new line. One should never give the idea to any member of the public, however humble he may be, that one is treating him with discourtesy. A politician, under the stress of circumstances, does not do that. But, in the services, if people, on account of the security of their pensions, begin to think that it does not matter what the public feels, that is dangerous. This must go. I have received far too many complaints about such treatment of the public.

"People whom I have known for dozens of years—they are humble folk, may be peasants—come to me. I might not have time to see Secretaries to Government or any officials. But I never say 'No' to an ordinary man who comes to see me. I would very much like to stop in the middle of the road and talk to him. Perhaps you may not be able to do like that. This democratic approach is admittedly wasteful. My time is precious; your time is precious. However wasteful it may be, I think it is highly important that I should meet him, talk to him, and if I could not help him, tell him so sweetly and send him away with a feeling of comfort. When he comes to see me, that individual is not an individual. He represents to me the millions of people like him. I think in terms of those millions. How am I to speak to them and comfort them? So, he becomes the embodiment of something huge and big. India is not me and you. India is the lot whom we presume to treat with contempt and discourtesy. It is therefore very important how we deal with the public. A lot of people come to make mischief and waste time. Anyhow, never allow the common man take the idea that he is being treated with discourtesy and contempt. This is of the highest importance in a democratic set-up. I can tell you that the biggest man in India, Gandhiji, never turned a man away, whether he came from any distant country or from our own country. He never said 'No' to any one who came to see him. Remember, he

was a frightfully busy man.

“I have placed some ideas before you and I hope you will think about them. I have done so with a feeling of guilt, because, I do not know much about what the organisation is doing, but when I come here, I must, to a slight extent, justify myself.”



## **THIRD ANNUAL GENERAL BODY MEETING**

### **(April 6, 1957)**

"The annual meetings on which I come to you are more or less of business character and they provide me with an opportunity of making some general remarks. A person who is not dealing in an expert way with a specific subject will evidently go in for generalisations on the various points. And as I am not taking any particular subject and I am no expert anyhow; so I say many things about many subjects. Looking at this Institute from a distance, sometimes looking at its publications on coming here every year, it seems to me that the Institute has been making good progress. One of our members said something about the lack of research. As a matter of fact, this Institute started functioning really only since a full-time Director appeared on the scene.

"We have been told that similar Institutes in other countries have begun to appreciate its work. There can be no doubt about the importance of the work which faces you today. Taking advantage of the presence of so many distinguished persons who have come here today, I am glad that from a small annual business session this gathering will spread out into a conference on a specific subject matter, viz., recruitment and training for public services. We had a seminar on this subject some months ago. Now, this is something which I feel as really solid and worthwhile. I am quite sure that it will bear results. It may be that the results may not be very obvious, but it would anyhow be an earnest discussion of subjects of high importance. I often wonder how we have to approach these subjects. What I mean is that there are several approaches to them—the technician's approach, the professor's

approach, the administrator's approach and, may be, the politician's approach, and the man-in-the-street's approach. I believe that most of you who have gathered here at this meeting are, probably, people of either of two types: the administrator's type with actual experience behind or the professor's type. Both types are very important, both having a fund of knowledge at their disposal. It may be said, however, that neither of these two types represents the man-in-the-street's approach. I do not think the man-in-the-street approach is likely to be well informed, or even very helpful. Whatever it may be, it is an important approach; obviously because it is the man-in-the-street or in the field who counts; because the administration is after all meant to serve him ultimately. You must always remember that aspect; if you do not, you will have no solid relationship or ground. It is worthwhile repeating this, because the administration has not only to be good but it has also to be felt to be good by the people affected. That should be always so and it is all the more necessary in a fully democratic set-up.

"I said a 'fully democratic set-up', because a full democratic set-up is being fast developed not only in this country but in many others too. Since the last generation or so, democracy has spread out. This spreading out of democracy brings, and ought to bring, all kinds of changes in the relationship between the administrative apparatus and the people. Take the word which all the more used to be, and still is, usually looked down upon: that is 'bureaucracy' or the 'bureaucrat'. During the British period it was considered to be a bad word by us, and something of that still hangs about it even now. It stood for government officials who considered themselves superior to the common man, the common human beings. There was something in that criticism, and I think, it is still somewhat true. Obviously, when there is a democratic set-up now, there must be a full realisation of the implications of democracy—how it affects public administration, and how public administration affects it. After all, it should be one of the principal functions of public administration, in its broader context to direct democracy into right channels. In fact, public administration, though necessarily requiring more and more things like training and trained service and experience, has become more and more allied to democracy, the democratic element, so that there appears to be no hard and fast demarcation

line, in administration, between the trained public servant and the representative of the democracy. If there is no such reliance, or no such mixing together, there may be friction, and there will be hardships on both sides.

## II

“Now, what is self-government? We have a Parliament which is sovereign, which is elected every five years, normally speaking. It is obvious that the vast majority of the measures considered and passed by Parliament are in a way being considered by the 360 million odd people in the country. If I may say so, the people’s representatives tend to function on the basis of a feeling of the general pulse of the people. The latter have got the power to kick out a Government, or a Member, after a certain period of time, as it is important to keep in check the Government or Parliament. Again, there also exists a general feeling or awareness in the people that things are being done according to their wishes or in consultation with them; in fact, they have begun to feel that they are functioning, that they are governing themselves. It is only partly true, but it is true enough in the sense that there is a check on the Government, and also on Parliament, that it would be kicked out if it went too far in any direction. Therefore, it behaves and tries to keep in line with public opinion. By and large, a Parliament or a Government does what is reasonable without really making a reference to the people. So long as it gives the impression that democracy has been preserved and that people are being consulted, that their wishes are being respected, it is all well. But whether they are actually consulted or not is another matter. If they get the impression that things are being imposed upon them, then friction arises.

“Apart from doing this work, the administrator, whether the is low down or high up in the scale, must give the impression, even if that impression is not cent percent correct, that he is working through public will and carrying out the public will. Of course, it cannot be done always, you cannot carry out everybody’s will; but the broad impression that he is functioning in accordance with the public will, always thinking of public grievances, trying to remedy them, consulting the people and so on, must be given. I know it is a big thing to consult everybody. Such an impression

can be created or not created—it all depends upon the manner of functioning of the administration. It is quite essential in a democracy to create this impression both in the interest of the public and the administrator. Otherwise, democracy rebels; may be not immediately but after a period of time; may be a month later or a year later, it rebels and it creates trouble. This applies generally to all types of administrative activities but it applies more so to work of a social character, which affects the people at large. Therefore, it becomes all the more important that the administrator has his hands on the pulse of the people all the time, and the people feel that this man is one of them, that he is reflecting their wishes and will always reflect their wishes.

“The administrator doing an honest man’s job, and thinking that he is doing his utmost, often does not receive the recognition that is due to him. In fact, he meets with criticism and curses and feels irritated and hurt. An able administrator, however, will always do the right thing and make the people feel that he reflects their wishes. That sensation must come to the people, that he is reflecting their wishes to some extent. When a multitude of voices are advising the administrator or criticising him, obviously he has to make his own choice and function according to his own decision. He cannot listen to and agree with each of the hundreds and thousands of voices which advise him in their own way. But by his manner of functioning he should make them realise that he has given due consideration to what they said and that he has been courteous not only to them but to their thinking. That way, by and large, he will be able to satisfy each of them to some extent.

“In administration, as in most things in life, it is not only what one does, but the manner of doing it, that is exceedingly important, especially in dealings with large masses of human beings, as in a democracy. Of course, what you do is important enough but the manner of doing is of the highest importance—the manner of approach to the individual or to the group. I would like to stress this especially because it is of the highest importance, of course, for the politician, but equally so for the administrator. The politician realises this normally, because he will have to go if he did not realise it quickly enough. The administrator, however, can continue much longer without realizing it fully; but there will be ill-feeling against him and he

would not be able to do his work adequately because most of it now involves the active cooperation of masses of people. The police functions no longer dominate the scene anywhere in the world. Each State wants to rise socially, economically, in all kinds of activities. As a matter of fact, in a way, all public administration is bureaucracy. The growth of socialism is the growth of bureaucracy. Bureaucracy will grow. It is very odd that the people who shout most loudly against bureaucracy are the people who want more and more of it. That is what is involved in the growth of socialistic avenues of work. The administrator's work is becoming bigger and bigger, not merely just keeping the peace in particular areas or collecting taxes. All this involves close contacts and touch with the people and winning over the people to his side. It involves, in fact, something of the approach of a politician, of a good politician, of an effective politician—not in the sense of the politician's approach when he tries to get votes, but the normal approach of a politician when he wants to win over the people to his side to do something with their help.

### III

"Incidentally there is a mention in the Report of the Director of a research project on local self-government. I think that it is of the highest importance that this Institute or any other should give consideration to the administrative problems of local self-government and even more particularly to those of panchayats. There are hundreds and thousands of panchayats in this country. They form the real base of our democracy. If that base is unsound, then we are not cent percent stable democratically, even with the second base of our Parliament. We are told that panchayats have not succeeded because there are squabbles, there are parties, there is corruption and all that. It is true, I think, that our experience of panchayats has been distressing. But real democracy cannot be at the top, it can be only at the base; and in India, this is not something alien; it is something natural to this soil. The fact remains that the panchayat is the primary base of our democracy and we have to improve it.

"We have to evolve ways and methods of doing things to combat faction and corruption in public administration. To take an instance, some kind of compensation is often given in the



villages to a large number of people, or some relief work is taken in hand in some villages, and some petty official is put in charge of giving relief or compensation. There always are and there will always be great delays in giving it. Very often, by the time it reaches the recipient, either most of it disappears or by then the recipient has suffered a great deal. What are we going to do about it? Are we to wait till everybody is thoroughly honest and will not delay things? Of course, we should try to do that, but we cannot wait. Suppose we try another method of disbursing relief. Suppose the whole village is gathered together and the Government announcement about the scale of the compensation is made in public. The whole village will hear about it: 'come forward, you take this much'. You see the chances of corruption would become lesser because the matter becomes too public. It is a very simple thing which is not done. Why can't we work through simple methods? I have suggested that instead of summoning the people, and their coming again and again, let the official go and sit in the village and call all the village people, announce publicly the Government's decision about compensation and say: 'come along, take it here and now'. And where this is done immediately, the chances of somebody delaying it do not exist.

"Unless some such methods are evolved, corruption will become serious. Of course, some may continue even with new methods, for its full elimination requires higher standards of integrity on the part of the people and other things. But we should make it more difficult for corruption to occur.

"The biggest thing that leads to corruption is delay. The moment you give an officer a chance to delay matters, he can extort money in order to do something. Therefore, a method should be evolved which makes it impossible to delay. If there is no delay, there is no corruption. But we sit in rooms and form rules and regulations involving a great deal of delay. I do hope that the Director of this Institute will take in hand a study of panchayats. He may leave out municipalities and district boards for the time being. What is important is to start with the base, *i.e.*, the Panchayat, and examine what it can do and what methods it should adopt for its successful functioning.

#### IV

"I wonder if any or some of you have come across an address

delivered by an Englishman, Mr. K. Blount, in October 1956 at Chatham House, London, on 'Science as a Factor in International Relations'. I think it appeared in 'International Affairs'. It is a very interesting address and I would like to draw your attention to it in connection with the forthcoming discussions in your Seminar on the question of training. I did not know this before, that a person who has gone in for purely technical studies is not allowed to enter the senior administrative services, for he is not cultured enough or an allround educated person that a public administrator should be. In discussing other matters, I hope you will discuss this too.

"Here, I am thrown back to the time when I was at school in England more than half a century ago. There used to be a great argument then in regard to the form and extent of introducing the subject of science in schools, *i.e.*, as a compulsory or as an optional subject. I suppose there have been some changes in the last 50 years; anyhow there is always this attempt, this pulling, in two directions of what are called 'cultural subjects' which presumably produce an integrated human being, and 'technical and scientific subjects' which presumably produce a useful man. It may well be argued that too much stress on technology and other branches—specialist branches of physical sciences—has led to a certain lopsided growth of human beings in industrially and technically advanced countries. It had led to too great a power being placed in the hands of human beings without the corresponding moral capacity to use it rightly. But that is only one aspect of the problem. The other aspect, and an exceedingly important one, is that a country can only survive today if it has enough of scientific and technical personnel. There is no particular reason that the scientist should be an uncultured person; it may well be that the scientist is more cultured and more integrated than a person who has read, let us say, only literature.

"I have already referred to Mr. Blount's address. He brings out some points in a way which strikes your mind. Science itself is very old but scientific methods are about 150 years old. The application of the scientific methods, let us say, to industry, as everybody knows, makes a vast difference today. We all know of tremendous changes that science has brought in every field. And now we belong to the hydrogen bomb age, a tiny bit of mass converted into enormous energy which can be used for good or

bad purposes. Mr. Blount humorously points out that if a country wants to progress it must have the capacity to get itself changed. Any country which is traditionally-minded in regard to various matters, including administration, is doomed in a rapidly changing world. Scientific methods help you, by collection of data, statistics and all kind of things, to assess the forces in action, to control and watch them and to stop and remedy what is wrong. In fact, the scientific methods means planning. Planning is the scientific method; it is science in action. Planning has to be flexible, it has to be wide awake and alert. That applies not merely to industrial processes, it applies to administration as well. Administration has to adapt itself to the changing phases of society.

"A second point which Mr. Blount has stressed is that everything depends apparently on the number of technologists and engineers you have in the country. We cannot ignore it. Taking the big countries today, he adds, that, by and large, it is now generally agreed that human beings given the same chance could produce the same results. And given the same chance, therefore, the bigger the countries and the more the population, the more the results. And that leads us to conclusion that China and India, being two countries with vast populations, are likely to forge ahead in technical and scientific fields. Their industrial productivity is naturally tremendously increasing. It seems all the more true of China. India is going in the right direction, but it has to struggle with traditionalism in the shape of some aspects of Hinduism, caste, etc. But, anyhow, India is going along the road. From the point of view of scientific technique, Western Europe appears to be somewhat at down-grade and the United States at the peak. The Soviet Union has, in the application, both in width and intensity, of their science and technology, gone ahead very fast and is likely to move faster still in the future.

"The traditional concept of administration as something apart from the normal life of the community, is, I think, completely out of date today. In fact, the administrator, who knows nothing of the other jobs, would not be a good administrator. In the highly complex society of today the integrating aspect of his role has become exceedingly important, and he must, therefore, keep himself fully informed not only of the developments in the social community he serves but also of those in the world at large. There are many problems but the general impression that I get of the

world is an impression of disintegration, not of integration. It may be, of course, that this disintegrating process is connected with this transitional phase and out of this disintegration some bigger and deeper integration will come. Anyhow, we are all living in a disintegrating world, where standards have disappeared, moral values have been bidden goodbye, and people think more and more in terms of power over Nature. It is obvious that all this technological and scientific progress in the world, unless it is balanced by some kind of moral standards and ethical values, is likely to lead to destruction. That is why we are so concerned over the basic question presented by atomic energy. Use it for evil, it will destroy the world; use it for good, it will raise the world to unknown standards of progress and happiness."



## **FOURTH ANNUAL GENERAL BODY MEETING**

### **(April 5, 1958)**

"Friends, you have just re-elected me as the President of this Institute. As I was coming up here, the Director told me that he troubled me only once a year. It was probably correct. Except for this annual visitation I beg to say I do not function as President or in any other capacity associated with this Institute. That, of course, is my fault, not the fault of the Institute; and therefore, I feel hesitant over this annual display of your confidence in me; but, on the other hand, it would be also silly if I were to cry about it. I am grateful to you if you are content with me as I am.

"I suppose that during the past two years there has been a good deal of thinking and discussion, and a growing criticism, about the ways of public administration, the way Government works; it is a healthy sign, and to some extent it should always take place. This Institute of Public Administration is itself an outcome of that feeling—that Public Administration is a subject of great importance and that some organised thinking and study should be given to it, and not merely letters in the newspaper or something in the files.

"As you know, we have an O & M Division in the Central Government here and possibly in some States too. Shri S. B. Bapat, who has been intimately connected with this Institute's work, is also running the O & M Division whose function is to improve our methods of work, to avoid delay and have greater efficiency, and all that. Somebody referred to delay in one of the questions raised on the Annual Report. As I remarked last year

too, I have no doubt that the biggest and the most important thing in administrative work is the avoidance of delay. Most administrative troubles including corruption come from delay than from anything else. Therefore, it is a matter of highest importance. At the same time, nothing is more difficult than to avoid delay. It is extraordinary how the ways of Government are so fashioned as to bring about delay. Maybe, it is because of the factor of the democratic procedure, or, even more than democratic, the bureaucratic procedure, because they are meant to help to check on each other and these checks become so overwhelming that the things sometimes are not done or done with a great amount of delay.

"There has been some rethinking in recent years about the basic concepts underlying the administrative system, partly because it is inevitable and partly because we are passing through a great and transitional phase in social and economic spheres—involving as it does a tremendous extension of activities of the administration; government taking upon itself tasks that were not previously undertaken by it. We have had, as you know, during the last few years, many important reports on administrative questions—the Appleby reports, not one but two, and some others. We are constantly discussing in Parliament, whatever Ministry it be whose demands or activities are before it, about the public administration part of that Ministry. Today, this afternoon, we were discussing the demands of Ministry of Community Development and the criticism in Parliament was mostly about the administrative aspect—why a particular thing was not done normally, why it was delayed and why there was no public cooperation and similar questions.

"Public administration, apart from the normal features that it should have, should be intimately concerned with public co-operation. The idea of a public servant sitting in a world apart and doling out impartial justice is completely out of place in a democratic society, and much more so in a dynamic democratic society which is moving forward, because the very pace of moving forward depends not on the public servant at all but on the people, and if there is no intimate connection between the people and the public servant, then he may be efficient but there is no movement forward. The whole conception of the public servant in India has in the past been rather a static conception. Doing one's job

as efficiently and adequately as possible, and impartially, was the conception in British times. As I was sitting here, I glanced through an article in the recent issue of your Journal on 'Civil Service Neutrality' by Shri S. Lall. Civil Service neutrality is a fiction which I have often wondered at. How any thinking person can be neutral, I have not been able to understand. In the old days, of course, I know exactly what it meant, and I think it is a good thing within limitations; but the way it is pompously displayed is, I think, not only not right but completely wrong. That a civil servant should obviously be above party politics, I can understand. He must, as far as possible, be a detached, objective person, considering problems in a detached and objective way, and rendering advice for accurate action—that also I fully understand. But the way the concept of neutrality of the civil service is sometimes put forward, or the way it is considered, is something entirely different. During British times, there was a certain definite pattern of Government which the British Government had laid down; and neutrality meant keeping within the strict lines of that pattern of Government—going outside it was tantamount to lack of neutrality. Neutrality thus, in fact, meant extreme partisanship, not at all neutrality. Full acceptance of what the British Government had laid down, the four corners within which he was to function, that was called neutrality of the civil servant. If a person raised his voice against the established pattern, he was supposed to be an anarchist. That he had to function within a prescribed framework is understandable, but why call it neutrality?

"In a period of dynamic growth, however, we want as civil servants persons who are not, if I may use the word without any disrespect, merely headclerks but people with minds, people with vision, people with a desire to achieve, who have some initiative for doing a job and who can think how to do it. But the person who is to be completely neutral is a head clerk and no more. He would do his work efficiently as a head clerk, no doubt, but nothing more. Can a person be neutral, I ask you, about basic things which we stand for, our State stands for, our Plan stands for, *e.g.*, a socialist pattern of society?

"Now, can a civil servant perform adequately functions relating to the attainment of a socialist pattern of society, if he is entirely opposed to that conception? He might to some extent, but not with any enthusiasm because, if he is opposed to the very

growth in that direction, then he is a drag on it. Again, our Parliament has often expressed itself against what might be called a communal approach to political problems. The Government is opposed to it. It is the point of view which either we have or do not have. It is no use declaring that we are neutral here. Neutrality has no meaning in this context. It is perfectly clear that, under a democratic form of government different parties come into power at different times, and I can understand that the civil servant should not be partial to any party. But he cannot be neutral about the basic issues. I am not quite conversant with all the developments connected with advent of the Labour Government in Britain and how the civil servants there adapted themselves to it. But I happened to be in England on two or three occasions just about that time, and I heard the bitterest complaint from the Labour leaders about the attitude of the Civil Services. I remember with what extreme warmth Prof. Harold Laski spoke to me about it.

"The writer of the article on 'Civil Service Neutrality' mentioned by me earlier says that the Civil Service in Britain is a model. Now it is an excellent Service, but this fact is seldom mentioned so openly, in that country. Shri Lall has arrived at the same conclusions which I have reached in my own thinking. The British concept of the civil service neutrality is a logical outcome of the political framework within which the British Civil Service has grown and developed. During the last century, the major issue that divided the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party in England was free trade. Great arguments were put forward on both sides as if the future of the world depended on nothing else. The civil servant was supposed to keep his hands off such party issues. Things have, however, changed a lot since. Some sort of state intervention is now accepted by all, whether it be the Conservative Party, the Labour Party, the ordinary citizen or the civil servant.

"In India, we are at present in a stage where all future development depends upon the acceptance of certain basic assumptions and on intelligent and prompt and quick action. What is the civil servant to do in these circumstances? Naturally he cannot be a partisan to any party, but must he be inactive and without any views of his own on basic matters? He will not be happy like that, nor will anybody be happy. Take another matter. I was wondering only yesterday, how far, at our school for the training



of the I.A.S. probationers, the trainees were being taught to apply their minds in a positive way towards the consideration of certain basic things for which we stand. Certain basic issues merged out of our struggle for freedom and we should give the probationers the background of these issues to enable them to understand intelligently the current problems of the country. But I am not in favour of too much conditioning of the mind. We must avoid any extreme effort to condition the individuals as they do in some communist countries, and also in some other countries which are not communist. Such an effort is made in all countries in varying degrees. But too much of it does not quite fit in with the democratic process. To some extent, there is always conditioning by school books which you choose as your text books. If you want to condition the mind in the normal way of nationalism, you would select books which applauded nationalists. We must, however, take care not to cramp pliability and individuality. There are certain major problems that the country faces today; and whether you hold a socialist view of life, or a cooperative view of life, a communal or an anti-communal outlook, you cannot be neutral to their solution. All of us have to be clear about them, the public servant too should be clear about them, though with an objective and detached approach. Otherwise he will not be able to put in that energy which he must towards their solution.

“Here, I venture to re-emphasise two other important aspects of the problem. One is that in the modern age the success of the public servant lies, in addition to ability, efficiency and integrity, upon his capacity to cooperate with the public. It is an essential requirement of the public servant of today. If he cannot meet it, all his efficiency is not of much use. His real success in his job depends on the extent to which he can evoke public cooperation. The second aspect, to which we are at present directing our minds, is related to the training of the public servants initially in such a way as to avoid their developing an ‘ivory-tower’ attitude in their careers.

“Now I shall leave you to your tea. Thank you.”



## **FIFTH ANNUAL GENERAL BODY MEETING**

**(April 25, 1959)**

"Whenever I speak on these occasions it is not so much about the very important specific problems with which you deal but rather on certain general considerations which, I think, are important. I am just trying to refresh my memory as to what I said last year on this occasion. I am afraid I might repeat myself, though a certain measure of repetition about important matters is not bad.

"Yesterday, it so happened, I was in Mussoorie and I paid a visit to the Research Centre of the Community Development Organisation. I was very much impressed by that little Centre, only about 50-60 persons taking a course for, I think, six weeks at a time. Each batch contains a number of servicemen and a number of non-servicemen. I dislike, and I don't think it is quite correct to use, the words 'officials' and 'non-officials', which are a relic of the British times. People are servicemen and non-servicemen; that I can understand. What am I? Am I an official or non-official? I am obviously an official but I am not a serviceman. The correct description, therefore, is a serviceman and a non-serviceman, just as in our diplomatic service we might say a particular person is a careerman or a non-careerman, though they are both in service. So both these are, I find, mixed up at this Research Centre, but when I stopped a little while at the Centre I did not meet them, as normally I am supposed to meet people. When I pay a visit the people are generally collected together and I am supposed to address them, which may be sometimes helpful but not very much, and

certainly I get no idea of what they are doing. But this time I found them carrying on their work separately. Each group, which, for some reason I could not understand, was called a syndicate, and each syndicate was discussing a subject heatedly. There were seven syndicates and the idea was to discuss a subject for two weeks or so, then draw up a report and circulate it to other syndicates which discuss it. Ultimately all syndicates meet together for a joint discussion of their individual reports. Obviously this method seems to me superior to listening to lectures. If two people come out, meet and criticise each other's views on a subject, their consideration of that subject becomes more and more mature and deeper.

"So I was rather impressed by this method, specially in a study of a subject which is not a subject about which you get too many precedents, which is a dynamic, growing subject. In a sense community development in its various aspects covers such a variety of public administration that although it does not deal with higher echelons of public administration it does deal with its lower levels in the rural areas and almost everything in the rural areas comes into touch with community development. And I feel that more and more attention is needed to what might be called the lower ranks of public administration, than to the higher ranks. Higher ranks are important. Because higher ranks get some attention they are much more in the public eye, but the lower ranks are much more important for the life of the common people. I do not know how far this Institute or other institutes of the kind think of that aspect of administration at the level of the petty revenue official, the petty this and the petty that, who is far more important from the point of view of the average resident of India, specially in the village, than high officials. Here, you may well recall an old story of an old lady whose son was, I believe, being tried for a very serious offence, may be murder, before the High Court. And when he was acquitted by the High Court, the old lady thanked the Judge saying: 'May you rise to be a Kotwal!' (Circle Police Official). For her the Kotwal was a much more important person than the High Court Judge. She had to deal with him daily. So we have to think of the lower functionaries, for they are the base.

“Great stress is being laid at present by the Planning Commission, by the National Development Council, and generally by Government on panchayats, cooperatives, etc. One aspect of that stress is that these organisations should not be officialised, that they should be controlled by the people of the village who form the members, and that the official element should be rather distinctly advisory—of course, helpfully advisory—but not at all in the sense of bossing over, interfering, and not allowing, if I may say so, the members of the panchayat to make any number of mistakes. Let them make mistakes; let us accept that a mistake is often better than the helplessness and powerlessness which comes from somebody sitting on top and carrying on the business of the panchayats. They will never grow by that. Now that is an important emphasis. There is nothing new about it. But it is an emphasis on the great part of the administration in the lower levels being carried on by the non-service elements, the non-official elements; and that brings new problems in its train. Presumably, when you deal with the administration most of the time you are thinking more of the service—not always of course. Now, as the country advances and specially as it advances towards the socialist pattern, there are likely to be more and more people engaged in Government service, the State services, at all levels. That is bound to happen. But far more persons should be engaged in administrative service in a voluntary way, in a non-service manner. In fact, we should draw in almost every active member of the public to do something or the other, in some form or the other, in some way, and thus have a large network of administration. I should like this Institute to devote its attention to the study of the administrative problems lower down the official scale, and more especially to the question of the non-serviceman coming into the picture and taking part in administration at the lower levels and growing, as he does this work, because the most important thing is that when he does it, he grows.

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“Nowadays we are talking a good deal about cooperatives, and it is suggested that we should cover every village as a co-operative, barring perhaps—I do not know—some special areas, like tribal areas, which will also have cooperatives, maybe of

somewhat different kind. Now this is a pretty big undertaking—having every village in India as a cooperative. Again that requires a good deal of work, some kind of training, sometimes highly specialised, sometimes a little less so, and I take it that Governments—State and Centre—are going to take steps to train people of every type through highly specialised courses, maybe of a year or six months, shorter courses of a month, even shorter courses for the panchas and the sarpanchas of three or four days, just to explain to the millions of villages to give them some idea of cooperative and panchayat work. We are launching out, in this way, in new directions outside the scope of our old administrative apparatus and we want to give far greater power to panchayats and to the village cooperatives than they have today, knowing full well that they may misuse it, make mistakes, and the like. The mistakes of the panchayats will not endanger the security of the country. We can survive it. But they will suffer for it, they will learn from it, and the public will learn from it too.

“In fact, the biggest mistakes or the biggest of errors that we commit are the errors of not doing things or delaying things. I am convinced of that. A mistake is far better than not doing a thing. You can rectify an error but you can never catch back the time you have lost by not doing something. Enough stress had been laid, in my address last year, on what I have said above. This year also, a reference has been made to this question of delay, to procedures which involve delay—apart from the individual’s slackness, it is procedures that involve delay. In spite of every effort, we still go through procedures which involve far too great delays. We have to be careful. There is a word which has a bad odour about it. It is a big word—bureaucratisation—too much bureaucracy. Bureaucracy is essential. Bureaucracy means organised work. There is nothing wrong about it—about work in an office; but if we have too much of it, it grows by—what is it called?—Parkinson’s Law. Bureaucracy really has an amazing capacity to grow and create work for itself which is not wanted for public purposes at all. We then work for each other. We have to be always on our guard against this and the best way to avoid all this trouble is to avoid processes involving delay.



"The other day I was in south India, in the southern districts of Madras. It had nothing particularly to do with public administration, but I was very much impressed by the rapid improvement being made there in primary education. In numbers alone, of course, the progress has not been much, but it was very impressive and heartening. Every two miles I had to stop because there was a school and the children were lined up. I travelled several miles by an open car, and you can imagine hundreds and thousands of school children, vast numbers, standing by, and many of them of amazingly small age; to me they looked to be 4-5 years and upwards. The Madras Government has specially introduced midday meals and what they call school improvement societies. I went to two conferences of school improvement societies and I was astonished at the bigness of their organisation. Each had about 12,500 teachers, and at least a considerable number of them were women, collected together and discussing their problems in an orderly way—how to improve their schools. There was a wonderful display of gifts; it was an astonishing display really. The quantity itself was impressive, all collected from parents, and others, for the improvement of the schools. What was more significant was a spirit of enthusiasm among the teachers and parents and all concerned and all cooperating. There were many Catholic schools and other schools, all cooperating in this. That heartened me more than many things that I usually see.

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"We are today giving a great deal of intensive thought to the Third Five-Year Plan, the approach to it, the size of it, the content of it. We are still in the initial stages although we have been discussing it very deeply for at least six months. We want the greatest discussion, the greatest consideration not in a wishful thinking way, not in a general way as perhaps inevitably we have had to do when we started our First Plan but in a more detailed and concrete manner, looking well into the future; because the more you think of the Plan, the more you have to look to the future in five years, ten years, 20 years, in a perspective way. The Plan is for every aspect of our life and it affects even our institutional approaches; and the problem comes up to us in

various ways. How far the present type of institution is suited to the type of society for which we are working? Some institutions are good, I am not criticising them; but it is not a question of goodness or badness but of fitness. How far the existing institutions will fit in with the type of society that we are trying to evolve? This Institute will have to keep this particular matter very specially in mind and try to follow the thinking of the evolution of the Third Plan from the institutional point of view. There are sometimes discussions and criticisms, specially in Parliament, about the public sector or the new corporations and other undertakings in the public sector that are functioning; and, I think, it is a very good thing that these criticisms take place in Parliament, though very often they are not wholly justified. Nevertheless, it is a good thing. Of course, the private sector has no such tribunal to face, unless some major development takes place, when something may be said in the newspapers. But the newspapers are always full of questions and statements and discussions on the public sector.

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“Now I do not wish to be unfair to anybody but I should like to say that my firm opinion gathered after some knowledge is that the public sector in India today is infinitely superior to the private sector. I have not a shadow of doubt about it; it is superior in competence, superior in economy, and superior in the general outlook it is developing or the general public outlook. And I say, more especially, that, in spite of all the criticisms and the numerous errors and mistakes that we have made and we are making, it is more efficient and more economical. Despite occasional errors here and there, I am very pleased at the way the public sector is developing in India, whether it is the Sindri, whether it is the Chittaranjan, whether it is the Machine Tools, whether it is the Telephone Factory or any other project. You cannot easily adjudge the Hindustan Aircrafts: projects like these you can only measure by cost efficiency. Nobody gives them any publicity, not much, so that I should like to put on record my appreciation of the public enterprises. Even if you take the iron and steel plants, which are criticised, I think, they are very fine achievements—Rourkela and Bhilai. I should like

to say that it is very heartening sight how our people are working in the public sector; they are doing very good work.

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"There is one thing to which I referred last time too. Ultimately, an administration has to work with some objectives in view, more especially in a dynamic society. Administration is not obviously just doing some odd job, putting a note on a file, etc. It has got to aim at an objective. If the objective is, let us say, the Plan, the Second Five-Year Plan, or the Third Five-Year Plan that is coming, or let us say, a socialist pattern of society which we aim at, then surely the administrator has to think of that. He is not some kind of a static person who does not apply his mind to the basic objectives. He is working to an end, and must always keep that in view even in small things as also in big things. It may be, of course, that the manner of doing something may differ as there are differences of opinion but the basic objectives should be inscribed in the room, on the walls of the administrator's office. That is 'Where we are going to?' has to be remembered; only then can the institutions we have, be worked to that end properly.

"Well, you have honoured me by electing me again as the Institute's President, in spite of the fact that I only appear here once a year; and I am grateful to you for it. Thank you."





## **SIXTH ANNUAL GENERAL BODY MEETING**

### **(August 27, 1960)**

"First of all, allow me to congratulate you on this new phase of your existence in this new Hall. It is very spacious and it is not only good for you but good for Delhi which hungers after Halls all the time. You cannot get them.

"Now, this meeting of yours is more or less an official Annual Meeting. Nevertheless, in the remarks made by the Chairman and by Prof. Karve—I am only rather a showpiece in the Institute—and by your publications, I gather something of the work that is being done here.

"I have a feeling that while, no doubt, people may make suggestions for improvement and additions and all that, basically this Institute is performing an important function. After all, administration, and more especially public administration, is always important, but it is doubly important in the India of today. The administrative apparatus is growing. It is important because of the new types of activities which have to be undertaken. It is important that some kind of a rein should be put on the administration not to grow too much. There is always a tendency to grow. It has become so, as you very well know from all this talk about Parkinson's laws, etc. There is a great deal of truth in them. It is amazing how administration grows. I think it does require constant check. But, after all, in a modern State, and in every State, but in a modern State especially, the administration—the question of its efficiency and the way it does its work, its quality—is of extreme importance; and, therefore, Prof. Karve laid stress on quality. There is no point at

all if you had thousands of people attached to this Institute but there was no quality in them. Even a relatively small number of people of quality can set a tone and I think the main object of this Institute is to raise standards in administration and set tones. My impression is that it is doing that. They may do it better still, but anyhow it is doing that to some extent. I do think it is important, and it is important not only in the sense of the normal administrative work that has to be done, but in the fact that in India we are spreading out in social domains. Administration spreads out to public enterprises in a big way and raises entirely new problems—new aspects of the old problem, whichever way you like to put it. That applies even to private enterprise, but private enterprise deals with it in its own way.

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“Here in public enterprises, we come up against a certain inevitable inertia of the governmental apparatus. The inertia of any large undertaking tends to make it rather static. An inertia at this stage in India is obviously very bad. Therefore, in seeking what might be called, if I may say so, perfection in administrative routines, we often miss, or may miss, the object that we are aiming at.

“Take the Government of India, which has, I do not know how many, manuals of procedure, which some very highly talented people may understand, but most people do not. What are those manuals of procedure meant for? Apparently, I may use the word, perfection in administration. Ah! there must not be a mistake here, check, counter-check, references and all that. This is all well-intentioned but if that results in the thing not being done or a great delay occurring in doing it, then the main thing is gone, in spite of the perfection aimed at. Now that is a great difficulty which any public concern has to face. That is, curiously enough, the average administrator, not the special one, goes by precedent. He has to. Precedent has to be there and wherever precedent is the dominating factor, conditions are looked upon as static. Therefore, movement is slow and responsibility is spread out over anonymous individuals. That I think is a very important aspect for everyone of you, who is connected with administration, to consider, *i.e.*, what your

objective is. Is your objective the writing of a book or a fine manual of procedure, as to how things should be done, with as near an approach to perfection as possible? Or whether your objective is to get the thing done, no doubt correctly, otherwise there will be trouble?

"What is the objective? For instance, even in the Planning Commission's reports, it was said so much money has been spent on this or that. It was an indication, no doubt. But a far better thing would be what has been done and not how much money has been spent, as the money may not have been well spent, may have been wasted. Here, some ridiculous examples come to mind. I am not referring to the Planning Commission but to State Government reports which say that there has been so much money spent on roads. Actually, some of the roads may not have been built at all. But this is a silly example. It is not the usual thing. But the point is a shifting of our attention to things done, not so much to what we have spent upon them, not so much even, although it is important, to the manner of doing them, but to the thing done. That is the real basis, the basis of performance.

"I believe that in industry more and more wages, or whatever is paid, become tied up with what is done. How much a person works, he gets paid according to that, which is a very good approach. It is a fair approach to all concerned. It is not a particularly easy matter to have this kind of test for an administrator. You cannot measure his work easily. Nevertheless, I think an effort should be made to measure to some extent, to know his performance in different things. Or, at any rate, the objective to be kept before us should always be what is done, not what is written about. Then again, if you have an objective, it is not merely a question of the particular thing you do, although that is important, but the broad objectives that the administration pursues. Everything else has to be fitted into them.

"What are our broad objectives? The broadest of all, you may say, is, I believe, the socialistic structure of society in India. In order to attain that we have to go over innumerable difficulties and all that. It is true, and we have all the time to compromise with those difficulties, because we do not write on a clean slate. Human society is a very complicated thing. But it does become important that that objective is always kept in view and governs

our thinking and our activity. We may have to temper our activity or tone it down because of some circumstance beyond our control. That is a different matter but the objective has to be kept in view so that we are going in its direction. We may go fast and occasionally we may go a little slow.

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“No administrator, I suppose, or anyone else for the matter of that, can really do first class work without a sense of function, without some measure of a crusading spirit: ‘I am doing this, I have to achieve this, as a part of a great movement in a big cause’. That gives a sense of function, not the sense of the individual, narrow approach of doing a job in an office for a salary or wage, something connected with your life’s outlook or anything, perhaps being interested, as people inevitably are, in one’s personal preferment in that particular work. I do not say it is a bad thing to be interested. One is always interested in oneself and cannot get rid of it. Nevertheless, the main thing should be this sense of function in one’s job, and how we fit in that for the larger objectives you place before yourself: whether you are a public servant or a professor in a university, whatever it is, if you have got that, then you get a certain special halo around you, if I may use the word, which takes you out of the common rut and your work also gets an element of distinction because of that. So we must, therefore, aim at this: having a clearly defined objective in a well-run machine, anything, an administration or a factory, or something else. By their own impetus they go on and on. They go on because the machine is working and good administration gets that kind of impetus. But apart from that, where you are tackling new problems and the administration is growing, that old impetus is not quite enough. It is helpful, very helpful. But you have to supply a new drive all the time and that drive only comes from a clearer understanding of objectives and some measure of associating it with your function, if I may use the word again.

“Now, in India, we are facing, constantly as you see, quite extraordinary difficulties: difficulties normally outside the scope of the administrator’s work. We may have trouble over the language issue; trouble in Assam, Bengal, Punjab or elsewhere.

We may have trouble over something else, which really comes in the way of the normal work one has to do in the country, coming in the way of administration and everything. It is unfortunate because they divert attention from the real work. The real work in India, in spite of all this about which we see headlines in the newspapers, the real work fundamentally is this: the implementation of the five year plans. Planning is a comprehensive scheme with a set of objectives and the ways pointing to those objectives, and broadly speaking, it may be said, that it has been accepted in India. Criticism may be directed to some parts of it, some emphasis here and there. Something should be done here, something else should not be done. That is a different matter. But the broad approach to planning, as in the past plans, and also in the third plan, is, I believe, very widely accepted, and not only accepted in India—and this is rather a new phenomenon, if I may point it out—it is accepted outside India by people who are not necessarily partial to us at all, who are objective critics; who may even be sometimes slightly unfriendly critics of our policies, but who try to look upon it objectively; and this is, as I said, a fairly new development, because these people have come here from other countries, looking at it as experts. I am not talking about tourists, but men who have come to examine this, men who in their own countries follow different policies, and they have come to the conclusion that, broadly speaking, this is the only approach in India. It is rather an interesting aspect of this, because our approach has been not only conditioned by the objectives we seek to attain, but conditioned also by the objective conditions that surround us. It is not a doctrinaire approach, putting down all the things we like to happen. Therefore, the objectives are fairly clear. Although they are clear, I do not myself know whether that fact is adequately recognised by the average man or woman, and it should be our function to make everybody realise that these are our objectives and to make everyone measure any problem that arises from the yardstick of these objectives. That I think is rather important.

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“When we talk about public administration we think mostly of the higher ranks of the public administration, which is inevitable.

They set the tone. But, I think I mentioned it last year too, how important it is to think of administration at the lower levels, in terms of persons there, because there is, I believe, a big gap between the quality of the higher levels of administration in India and the lower levels. There should not be that gap, and we should try to improve the lower levels too, and make them feel that they are not some kind of people outside the ranks of the elect. This is, of course, unfortunately due largely to two things in India: our own fault largely, and the fault of the British.

“Whatever we may say, we are so caste-ridden, and not caste-ridden in terms of caste only, but in terms of other things: group-ridden consciously and very often unconsciously, so that it is difficult to get out of it. The British introduced in the services this caste feeling—the superior services, the inferior services, the I.C.S. and all that; and nothing could have been a more rigorous, narrow-minded, though may be efficient, caste than the old Indian Civil Service—with steel walls surrounding it—, and the others were kept down. That is a bad inheritance which we have got. It is going, of course. It is far less than it was. Nevertheless, this tendency of official caste, if I may say so, is there. It is a bad thing, not only in the sense of the machinery of government where one part of the machinery imagines that it is the most important part—a bigger piece of iron and steel—, and the other part is only a bolt. It is a wrong idea. The whole thing has to be considered as a whole. An individual person, who thinks himself as an individual and not as a part of a link in the whole machine, does not get the correct perspective.

“What is more important is, whether you are in the higher ranks of the administration or the lower ranks, you have to deal more and more with the mass of hundreds of millions of the Indian people. That is of vital importance and the problems that you have to face cannot be resolved, by and large, by official orders from your officers. They have to be resolved by those hundreds of millions, and you have, therefore, to develop the capacity to move with those millions, get them to move and move yourself.

“In any State, ultimately in any democratic State, if it is properly developed, or in any public welfare State, you have to remove the barriers between the administration and the so-called administered. The ultimate way to remove them is to make the

administered themselves administrators. I want you to think of it. Large sections of people should become administrators in some form or other, in some sphere or other. Whether they are administrators in the village or in the higher spheres, whether they are Panchas in the Panchayat, they are administrators in a particular field. And this association of ever larger numbers of people with the administration of the country—the breaking down of the barriers between the administrators and the administered, and at the same time giving everybody a sense of working for common causes—is a good thing, good from many points of view. I think that one of the biggest changes that has been taking place in the past year has been this conception which is often referred to in most unmusical words as ‘democratic decentralisation’. I wonder why we cannot find some other word. Of course, in Hindi we call it Panchayati Raj, which sounds much better. I have no doubt about that. It is spreading administration to hundreds of thousands of persons in the villages. That is administration. So don’t you imagine that an administrator is only the person who has got a degree from a university and who has a post somewhere, or best of all, he has had a special course here in your School? The Panch is an administrator. Every member of the Panchayat is an administrator in a particular sphere, and he should be recognised and respected as such.

“Apart from the theory of what I am saying, practical conditions are going to compel you and me, and all of us, politicians and others, to do that in the future, because, I think, the basis of our politics is going to be powerfully affected by the spread of what is called Panchayati Raj. The people are becoming conscious of its implications. The Panchayats, the Panchas, are not silent spectators. They are not the people running up to the Deputy Commissioner or the District Magistrate to say ‘Do this, do that for us’. They have to do it themselves. They have got the responsibility. It makes all the difference. They may make a mess of it here and there. Higher people in higher grades of life also often make messes of life. They have to face that. That is the only way and I think it is a tremendous thing. Therefore, I should like you to keep in view that your administration is something with which millions of people in India are associated and they should have a sense of being associated in doing things in every village. It is highly important.

"Then about the human approach in administration. Inevitably, administration—of course parts of it, especially in secretariats and the like—is apt to become cut off from the human side. It is not cut off if you are a District Magistrate; you have to deal with the human side all the time. But if you are sitting in offices in the secretariats, you are apt to be cut off. Again that is bad at any time. But in a dynamic and moving society where you have to move and move along with masses of people, it is very important to have the human approach. I do not know how any school can teach you the human approach; it is something outside the element of school teaching. But, nevertheless, it is important to draw attention to it because the most competent of administrators may be a flop if he has not got that human approach today. I have seen it happen in some departments at work, and I have seen that repeatedly: very good administrators just cannot get on because they have not that human touch. That becomes important.

"Finally, this business of telling people that you have to do this or that is not enough. You have to do it, of course. We had, this morning, a conference dealing with, what is called, public cooperation. That is, bringing the public into our major schemes and all that. I asked the question: 'public cooperation with whom?' Is it the idea behind that appeal for public cooperation that the administrators are the centre of things and the public should cooperate with them? That is a wrong idea or approach. We may be in important positions. We may be able to tell the people what to do. That is another matter. But to tell the people to come and cooperate with the administrators is not the right approach. The correct approach is that the people are the centre of things and we are going to help them, this is a psychological approach; but not that we are the centre, we the administrators; that we the Government, we the Ministers, are the centre of things and out of the goodness of our hearts we are doing good to the public. 'Let them co-operate with us'—that is not the approach at all which goes down with anybody. Therefore, it is a psychological thing, the administrator's approach. It should be a humble approach and it should always treat the person—whoever he may be, the peasant, the villager, the worker—on terms of friendly equality, never as a boss. This kind of thing has gone now. It does not



pay. More than that, and I tell you, in cases where you have to deal, let us say, with some of our primitive tribes, the only policy that goes down with them is the one to treat them as equals. The moment there is even a suspicion that you consider yourself their superior, your influence on them goes and if by any chance you show the slightest element of, what, shall I say, contempt for their way of life, it is bitterly resented.

"There is a very well-known instance. I think it was in the North-East Frontier Agency, or somewhere there. Long ago, I think it was in the late 19th century, a British officer went there with a platoon and all that and many people, and those 'frontier' people, came to receive him. They did not know who he was. Still they received him in a friendly way. This officer was foolish enough to make fun of some of their customs. He laughed rather slightly contemptuously. That night the officer and everybody who had gone with him were slaughtered just because of the insult the 'frontier' people felt—the feeling that 'This man comes to interfere with us'. This was, anyhow, an extreme example of a primitive people reacting. Therefore, there are strict injunctions today to any administrator who goes to such regions to treat their people always as equals, be respectful to them and to their customs, never to show that you are superior to them. That may be so there. But it really applies in your dealings with anybody, of any class, grade or degree. If I may say so, and I say so with some hesitation before teachers and professors, it applies even to children. Treat them as equals, your own child, and you will find a better response. Of course, the bond between children is an intimate bond of affection. But, nevertheless, this business of being superior and inferior, this approach, should go. Some people are superior in mind, of course, or in body, or in many things. It is a fact. Therefore, they are given greater responsibilities. But from the human point of view and from the point of view of getting things done by others, there should be no exhibition of superiority in the human approach.

"In the India of today, the administrative system should be, and to some extent is, of course especially in the Central Services, a unifying agency. It is very important because there are so many destructive tendencies. Our army is a tremendous unifying agency. Our men in arms come from all over India; they work

together, they get to know each other and they function in different parts of the country. The administrative services—all of them to some extent—, and more so the all-India administrative services, have to play their function of helping in this unifying process, which is so important.”



## **SEVENTH ANNUAL GENERAL BODY MEETING**

### **(August 26, 1961)**

"My part in the work of this Institute is, as you know, to come here annually and attend this function. I am glad to do so because it gives me some little insight into the activities of this Institute and also to some extent the way present-day problems of administration, which are growing in number and complexity, are being tackled here.

"I should like to say, however, that what little I know of the activities of this Institute, by coming here annually and by looking at your publications and journals from time to time, I have been impressed by them, and I do think that this Institute is doing good work. It may be that there is a legitimate criticism that its activities are, well, limited to some top-ranking people, more or less. That is almost inevitable to begin with. It must, in the nature of things, concentrate on improving quality all over, of course; but, first of all, quality has to be improved in those people who can improve quality in others, and so that is inevitable.

"And yet, I am wondering how far it will be feasible for this Institute and the Executive Council to consider certain extensions of its activity in the lowest grades of the administration. When I say lowest grades, I have in mind, at the present moment, the panchayats, the panchayat samitis, which are growing tremendously in importance, and which, I have no doubt, will play a vital part in the administrative apparatus of our country by virtue of their numbers alone, if nothing else. I do not quite know how this Institute can tackle that problem. Perhaps, it might specially study the problem as to how to tackle it. That is the first step.

Perhaps, it could open a small section specially for that purpose and give short courses, say of a month or two weeks even, for people specially connected with panchayat samitis, to come and take that course. I would personally like, if it is at all possible, for the very Panches themselves, some of them, can't be many, of course, to come here from time to time: not very many. Of course, there are hundreds and thousands—there may be millions in India. I do not know their number, a vast number. But nevertheless, they could choose a number every year for short courses. Of course, courses would have to be made for them; it is no good going to them with your rather high-class stuff. But sometimes the courses for them could be a good thing, I imagine. Anyhow, I suggest to the Executive Council to consider this matter as to how to approach this subject. You could get in touch, perhaps, with the State Governments on it, with the Ministry here of Community Development and Cooperation. But that, I think, is important because I am very much interested in this development of panchayats and panchayat samitis, and you have, at any rate, one member in your Executive Council, that is, the Chairman, who is an expert on it and has deep knowledge, and you could profit by that.

“Apart from that, you have to deal with a situation which is growing, developing and changing. Even in the purely administrative field of Government, it is enlarging and growing, but more so in the field of public or private enterprise, chiefly public. And there can be no doubt that a great deal depends on the success of the administration of that enterprise. We argue about public and private enterprise. The real fact of the matter is that its success comes from the efficient administrator, whether in public or private enterprise; ‘public’ or ‘private’ does not make much difference except in the consequences and the outlook. The actual thing depends on the administration of that enterprise. We have public enterprises in India which have been outstanding successes, and I have no doubt that they have been so not accidentally but because of the virtues and the ability of the men on the administrative staff there. We have others which have not shown such bright results. Again, I think, you should seek the remedy in the administrative staff, apart from other reasons which may exist. So, it is most important that our administrative apparatus should improve.

not improve in the normal old sense of a Government administrator who had to deal with certain limited set of problems, but in the modern sense of dealing with modern industry, with modern technology and the like, which again probably means that the old type administrator should be, not always but often, replaced by the expert administrator, the technologist, who knows that particular job well. All these new problems arise from our growth—industrial growth and general growth in various sectors of our economy. Many people may criticise it and many of their criticisms may be justified, or are justified, I think. But the fact remains that India is going through a period of fairly rapid growth, and rapid growth requires frequent adjustment of your administrative apparatus to fit in with that growth. It is just like a suit of clothes you wear. If you grow, you want slightly larger clothes, a slightly different type of clothes, or else either your growth will be impeded or the clothes will burst with your growth. One of the two things must happen. One has to have that type of mind which can adjust itself, which can realise the needs of the day and adjust itself. And not only the needs of the day, but the needs of tomorrow and the day after, some glimpse and outlook into the future; because the future is obviously one of tremendous potentiality in India and the world. Vast new forces have been released and we have not only to catch up but to do something more to make our own contribution to this new world in the way of ideas and practice.

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“Then, we have just had the Third Five Year Plan placed before Parliament and the public. Broadly speaking, I think it is true to say that it has been welcomed and appreciated by the public at large. Very few people in India disapprove of the whole subject of planning; they are very, very few. The main criticisms are in regard to some details here and there. But the real thing is not so much the criticism of the planning part. I think that time is past. We in the Planning Commission and others concerned have grown more experienced and more expert in planning. But the real question is not planning, but implementing the Plan. I fear we are not quite so expert at implementation as at planning, although there, too, we are

making improvements, no doubt. Now in this business of implementation, a very important factor is the administrative aspect; in this you can help, and I have no doubt you are helping, though indirectly. Of course, the other aspect in implementation, in the vast plans that we have and which concern millions of people, is not a set of officials who implement them; you have to bring in a certain understanding of the public, a certain co-operation of the public. I think every administrator should realise this public aspect of any major undertaking. He must, wherever he may be working and whatever the project may be, whether he is the old type administrator or the new type of technical man, he has to create an atmosphere of understanding and appreciation in the public and win their cooperation. It is not difficult if you try to do it, if your mind is bent that way. I think the administrator must realise that he has to explain things, explain things to everybody, to the person, even to the untrained labourer who is working at the job, and certainly to the trained staff, too, and everybody else. This is not fully realised. High class engineers, high class administrators in superior grades, do not always realise that the smallest man, even the peon in his office, should understand their work and should be made to feel that they are also doing their bit in that large undertaking. If you do that an atmosphere is created. I have no doubt that if this is done it helps and it helps in a curious way. Practically, it helps in a certain psychological way. The man on the top is surrounded by a psychological atmosphere which is helpful when people in all grades understand what he is doing. Therefore, I would attach importance to this approach all the time. I would repeat that this approach, of course, comes in the moment you deal with large masses of people and not live just in an office apart; of course, if you are dealing with any major project, whether it is a steel plant or some river valley scheme; you are dealing with large masses of people, trained or untrained. There must be this public approach of every senior officer to his juniors and right down to the trained and untrained workers in that project.

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“Now this leads me to another thought. We have people who are doing practical administrative work in the Government

of India and the State Governments, wherever it may be. And there are our universities and elsewhere, and this Institute, which discusses, considers, speaks about and writes about the theory of good administration. To some extent, not entirely, of course, they live in different spheres: the university professor, certainly, from the practical man. Take even a more obvious example. We have got very fine national laboratories. There is the National Physical Laboratory here in Delhi, and there is the University of Delhi, which teaches people the Sciences, etc. Now, to my amazement, the two are quite independent. They have no contacts. I do not understand this. I think that there should be frequent interchange. The head of the National Physical Laboratory should be, let us say, an honorary professor. He cannot give much time; I do not want him to give much time. But I would like him to come twice a month, at least, just to speak to the students there. He is a man of note, a man of great eminence, the man who is the head of the N.P.L., and his going to the students gives them a breath of fresh air, new ideas, and they profit by it and the university profits. In the same way, I should say that all these big laboratories and other places should be associated with the local universities. This is an obvious example. It may be somewhat more difficult to do it in other cases. In the same way, administrators, who do practical work should have a glimpse of theory, which they can through your Institute or otherwise. As far as possible, one should bring the practical aspect, practice together with theory, and that will lead to the advantages of both.

"You see, it is really the same thought running in my mind, whether it is the panch in his panchayat or the local panchayat in the village, or the top-ranking people in the laboratories and universities and administrations. It is always bringing practice and theory nearer to each other, and the more this is done, the better fitted the man is, because in all administration you have to deal with human beings. That is, an engineer may have to deal with iron and steel and cement and bricks and all that. But he has also to deal with human beings. Administrators have to do much more with human beings. To understand human beings, to come in contact with practical work, is important and to make them understand what you are doing is even more important. I should like this idea to run throughout your

activities. This reduces the walls and the barriers which separate the various grades and classes of work and produces an integrated organism, a project of people working for a certain object.

"Finally, our whole approach should be, what I would call, task-oriented: that is, you have got a job to do, a task to accomplish. If it is task-oriented, I think work will be swifter and more integrated for the purpose of fulfilling that task.

"You have been kind enough to elect me again as your President. You do so—you may get some advantage out of it—but you do so, well, at your peril and risk, because you know how little time I give to this Institute, except this annual function which I have thus far attended more or less regularly.

"I am grateful to you for it."





## **EIGHTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

### **(October 29, 1962)**

"I am very grateful to you that you have run through the business of this meeting with speed and brevity. That is not only a recognition of things but also adaptation to our work. We often recognise things but do not adapt ourselves too well to them. You have been good enough to elect me again as your President and I thank you for it, though I must confess that this honour is singularly ill-deserved, in the sense that, apart from attending the annual meeting, I do not perform any useful function for the Institute. Still, if you think this attendance itself is of some use, I will be glad to agree.

"The question that is naturally filling my mind, and the minds of many amongst you, is how we can deal in its various aspects with the present crisis and emergency which we are facing. Because it is indeed a vital matter for us as to how we function. We have had many difficulties ever since we gained Independence—economic difficulties and others. We have faced them and managed to carry on. The present crisis, however, is of a new kind, a novel kind, and we have to adapt ourselves to it and prepare ourselves, whatever the demands may be on us, with extreme rapidity. I am just thinking how this Institute can help in this crisis. This Institute is largely a thinking body; a teaching body too, not directly engaged in executive or other activities. Still, even the thinking part is important. Indeed, it is always important. And, I should like your Executive Council to consider how you can help in our meeting this crisis. Obviously, most of you are not going to don a uniform and become soldiers and go to the front.

But, as an Institute dealing with Public Administration, you can help by giving thought to the way the public administration can function in a crisis of this kind. It has to function with speed of course, and it has to relax, or change many of our rules which are time-consuming.

“It is true that war is a bad thing. But, when one’s country is attacked, there is no choice left about it: one has to defend, for to submit to it means the death of the soul of a nation. I am sure that India would never do that. We may look forward; we may work for peaceful solutions, but they must be in conformity with our honour and our integrity. What I am suggesting to you and your Executive Council is to think definitely and deliberately of how our procedures can be expedited and tightened up. In such situations, where one has to meet very difficult and urgent problems and decide quickly, we have not only to think correctly but lay down procedures that are both rapid and effective and as good as we can make them. And I am sure, if you think of that you will be able to offer suggestions which may be very helpful to Government. Naturally, Government itself is thinking of these things and from time to time, day to day almost you will hear of some new actions or new methods of procedures, etc., being introduced by Government. Only recently, two or three days ago, the President issued an Ordinance—the Defence of India Ordinance, which is very far-reaching one—normally only issued in war time. We may not be technically at war—we did not declare war, although we have been attacked in a war-like manner and we have to defend ourselves and are defending—the fact of the matter is that in effect we are. For various reasons—I think good ones—we have not made a declaration to that effect, and it is not necessary at the present moment that we should do so. It does not come in our way. So, we do not propose to do so for the present; I do not know about the future.

“War brings all kinds of burdens and problems. It brings an enormous increase of expenditure in war-like activities, which concern many branches of Government. It means a tremendous increase in production not only in weapons of war, not only in our procuring these weapons of war, in addition to our production of them, as much as we can, but also of various other goods, which are connected with war. You can say food

is an essential thing, of course, and must be produced. That is our normal desire too—to increase the production of food and food articles. It becomes much stronger and more urgent in a crisis of this kind. Clothing, boots, and I do not know how many things we require, it is a long list, because, it is no longer military operations at the front alone which matter. Each person at the front has to be supported by—I do not know how many—dozens, hundreds of people behind the lines, and it is of the utmost importance that the apparatus of production should function rapidly and smoothly. We have production in our public sector and in the private sector. Both have to be coordinated and directed to this one urgent and vital aim, *viz.*, to produce generally, but specially for anything required for these operations.

“Then the other very important aspect is prices. We should do our utmost to keep the prices low—not allow them to increase. That is no easy matter when we have to indulge in deficit financing. We cannot help it. Therefore, inevitably some methods of control and distribution become necessary. Sometimes people argue as to the desirability of controls; some are for and some are against it. But we have passed that stage of argument in the emergency that we face. We have to have controls—what controls I cannot say now. We have to face this problem of control of important commodities. Usually during war many people slip into wrong paths, taking advantage of the crisis of the nation and leaving the path of integrity. It is particularly necessary that we must see to it that this does not happen, in any small or big way. All these are matters which might well be considered by your Executive Council and suggestions as to what should be done made to the Government as well as to the public. I am sure that will help us all.

“You know of certain proposals made by Government, certain steps taken. Some of you have just been given some prizes, and out of the prizes a part has been given to the National Defence Fund. Then, there is talk about gold being given—it is a very important one—and also there is some talk about some bonds being issued for gold and so on and so forth. I should like to say, in this connection, that in this moment of this great burden that is carried by us, nothing has heartened me and delighted me more than the magnificent response of the

nation. It is natural. But I know that the representatives of foreign countries and people in foreign countries have been agreeably surprised at the response in India. Now, that is a basic thing which we must have—the response of the people generally. It is not a case of a few rich men, or even modestly rich men, giving part of their riches, but the poorest are taking part in it. Every morning during the course of the day, I have a stream of people coming to me—little children of 7 or 8 giving the little money they have—maybe a few rupees collected in the course of some months—also workers and others. This is a good sign. The President every day sends me what he has collected—which is given to him during the course of the day—not only money but gold, jewellery, etc. That is happening all over India. I think that shows—if anybody had doubts—that basically our country and our people are not only sound but full of that vital energy that a living nation should possess in facing a crisis. People seem to forget this and get wrapped up in our petty conflicts based on religion or caste or language or provincialism. Suddenly, we have risen above them; we are rising above them and that is the test, after all, of the people—whether they can rise when the demand is made of them. We have risen and because of that we can speak confidently of the future. I cannot say how long this crisis will last. What I have said and what I felt was that it is not a short one. No one can expect it to end quickly. So we have to be prepared for a long long period and it is a heavy time we shall all have and we shall have to work hard and with grim determination. But I am confident and certain in my mind that, however long this may last, we shall win in the end and triumph. This confidence has been strengthened a hundred and thousand-fold by the magnificent and splendid response that has come from all the people. Now the question is, as it has often been said, how we can utilise this response and not allow it to fritter away? Also, such a response coming suddenly is one thing, but to keep the spirit and morale of the nation in trim for lengthy periods is a more difficult task. But I am convinced that it will be done and will happen.

“It is often asked: Why did we not prepare ourselves for the ordeal that we have faced? Why did we have to submit to some serious reverses on our frontiers? It is a legitimate question and I do not know if there is any adequate answer for

it. But I will submit to you that we have a fine Army—a good Army which has done very well. But the fact of the matter is that we have been conditioned for long time past not to think of war. We may theoretically think of it, we may think of a slight operation here and there but not of a major war and all our thoughts have been directed towards building up the economy of the country—development, Five Year Plans, etc. We spent some money for our Defence Services but in terms of war that is very little and always we held the view that any major diversion to a possible war effort would have had consequences for our Plans. We talked of peace everywhere and we felt that way and we felt the importance of it too. To us the idea of devoting all our strength and resources to a war effort did not appeal. Because even from the point of view of war that is not carried on by weapons alone, which we would buy or get from abroad, but it can only be carried on by the industrial strength of the nation—the productive capacity. So, even from that point of view, our Five Year Plans are vital whatever other consequences we aimed at. Therefore, we concentrated on that and hoped, possibly it was wishful thinking, that no war of this type would face us.

“We certainly have done a good deal in increasing our Defence production—production of weapons, etc., because you will remember that till we became independent all our Defence Forces were practically controlled and guided by Whitehall, not only that all our policies were laid down in Whitehall and the officers here merely carried our directions. What was more important was that the British Government did not encourage the production of defence material here. Certain circumstances forced them to do something during the Second World War when they could not get them from England. Even then, there was always a reluctance to produce them here, and we had to rely on Britain for those arms and equipment. That is how we were when we became independent. Ever since then we have tried to build up industry for the production of arms and defence equipment, and what is very important is that we have built up a fairly strong Defence Science Organisation. There is not merely a question of producing a rifle or something like that; our scientists have to keep abreast of weapons which are much more sophisticated. We cannot produce them ourselves. We have to buy them. Weapons are so terribly expensive that

it becomes exceedingly difficult for any country, even the richest country, to keep pace with modern developments. We do not go in for the highly sophisticated things like atomic weapons, nor do we want to go in for them. But even apart from atomic weapons, there are highly sophisticated things which are little beyond our ken; far too expensive, and it would absorb all our resources. However, we have built up a Defence Science Organisation which is doing well. But of course, we cannot compare it to the highly militarised and scientifically developed nations. They spend billions of pounds on this thing every year. So, we have made progress in our defence industries and the progress is a continuous one. Nevertheless, it is not enough to face a big crisis like this, and that is why what we have to do today is not only to increase tremendously our production of defence requirements but inevitably to obtain them from other friendly countries which are prepared to give them to us, or to help us in this way on such terms as we can afford. What I mean is long terms of payments, etc. And, we shall do it of course, because, if the first need is defence, it has to be met, however heavy the burden may be.

"It is a fact, and I can very well understand the people feeling rather annoyed and asking: Why has this happened? Why are we not fully prepared? That is a justifiable question, although it does not take all considerations into account. Such preparation would have meant not only a full preparation for war, but war against an apparatus of a government which is in this respect one of the strongest in the world. China has not got all the sophisticated weapons, which the Soviet Union or the U.S.A. has. But, it has an army which is bigger than any army in the world, and it has a system of government which has concentrated for the last 12 years of its existence on preparing for war and strengthening its country. We have a different system of government. We do not like the idea of always living in a war atmosphere and preparing for it, and it is very difficult to keep up this war apparatus here except at the cost of everything else. It is one thing that, when one is faced with a crisis, then the people realise it and everybody works for it. Apart from that, it is difficult, and I would say almost undesirable, to work only for war preparation. For that means giving up the idea of economic progress in most other directions. Well, it is easy to be wise after the event. But, I

do not really know how we could have done otherwise. In minor matters—yes. But, in major matters, when you think of the major matters involved, you have to think not only of crores, or hundreds of crores, but of thousands of crores, and that is the position we have to meet. But, it is true that we have not in thinking been conditioned to war. We did not have any personal experience of war except perhaps a little bit in the North East Frontier, and it is not like countries of Europe and partly Asian countries too, where there is hardly a family which has not lost some beloved ones in the course of war, and sometimes lost all, which has trained them and conditioned them. We talk of peace in India, and we not merely talk about it but feel it. Yet, there is something superficial about our talking, because we do not know what war is. We are more peaceful perhaps than most others. But, we have never known the horrors of war and especially the horrors of a coming war—a nuclear war. We usually sign protests against war and for peace and against nuclear warfare. And now we are suddenly thrown into this cauldron. I do not mean to say that we are going to have a nuclear war. I think not. Anyhow, the country which has invaded us does not possess nuclear weapons and even if it did have any explosives, it makes little difference. It takes many long years to develop a thing like that even after some experimental tests have been made. But whatever that may be in so-called conventional forms, we have to face the horrors of war. It is confined to our frontiers and many people have suffered from it, many of our valiant people have died.

“I find that very exaggerated rumours are spread about the number of casualties. Now, my difficulty is that we do not exactly know—we can put limits to it—but we do not exactly know; reports have not come; reports have come of casualties here and there, 20 persons died, 10, 15, 30, 50; but no consolidated report of one or two major actions, and people talk in terms of thousands. I cannot say anything definite. But, I can tell you that, of all the people engaged, even giving the widest latitude to one's thought, the casualties on our side could not be more than 2,000 or 2,500 up till now. Because, many people who were missing are coming back; they have been dispersed; they are gradually trekking back. But even 2,000 is a large number and that is for the first few days. A

little more may have fallen. It is said that our brave people will have to face this onslaught of a ruthless enemy. So, we have to do our best in the circumstances and the first thing we have achieved is the tremendous response all over the country, and the morale of the country. The other things are, which I have hinted at, preparing ourselves rapidly, like processes of Government and other processes, to strengthen ourselves for fighting purposes, to strengthen our economy, to keep prices down so that we prevent profiteering. Profiteering is always bad; it is doubly bad when the crisis of a nation takes a toll of the lives of our brave men.

"We must increase our production. I have received numerous messages from industrial undertakings—defence and others—giving their assurance that they will work their hardest and that there would be no strikes, etc. That is good. But in accepting their assurance we have to be sure of one thing that we do not exploit that assurance or do not allow others to exploit it. That is important. It would be grossly unfair that we allow that exploitation of our workers in the name of national emergency and allow others to profit by that exploitation. I can tell you that in the defence industries we are working round the clock, no days excepted and no nights excepted, and we have already increased our production—I forget the exact figure, by four or five times. It has increased so rapidly. These are all hopeful signs. But we have to tighten ourselves up, and be prepared for a long-term trial and testing. In a sense, although it is a terrible thing to contemplate, it has its good points also. It brings us together. It strengthens our nation. We are apt to become too soft, all of us, whether we are politicians or business men. We forget the things that make a nation great, and lose ourselves in petty activities and conflicts.

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"I have not talked to you very much about this Institute of Public Administration except to suggest, which I do again, that I would like you to think about these problems that are affecting our country and make suggestions, both governmental and private, affecting our economy and our procedures of Government. It can hardly tell us how to conduct a war. I don't



ask you to do that. But you ought to be able to tell us how to deal with our economy and procedures of Government especially.

"Now to revert to other matters, there is our Five Year Plan which we consider very important. It would be a pity if we had to put an end to that Plan, because putting an end to it means weakening ourselves for the future. Even from the limited point of view of the present crisis, we cannot put an end to it. Of course, it will have to be adapted—maybe some matters which are not of the first importance may be given up, but, by and large, in regard to all the important matters in the Five Year Plan we should go ahead. After all, the expenditure involved, the burden of national defence and like matters, is far greater than the whole Five Year Plan put together. As I said, we may have to adapt it, and change it here and there, but basically we hope to continue it. Take another aspect of it—Panchayati Raj, which must continue. These are strengthening elements not weakening things, even though we have to spend some money. Here may I make a suggestion or rather approve of a suggestion already made in your Journal. An awful name has been given to the Panchayati Raj institutions, viz., 'Democratic Decentralisation'. But I find a much better name in an article by Dr. Appleby in your Journal—'Decentralised Democracy'. It is just the reverse and is much better instead of using Democratic Decentralisation. It sounds better and it lays stress on democracy. That is the basic thing. You decentralise it. Not decentralisation at the end and democracy a kind of offshoot of it. So I hope you will encourage the use of that expression. I think Prof. Menon himself is responsible for it. Because I do hope that in our other troubles, such as the burdens that we carry, we will not forget the basic thing, that is, our Five Year Plan, and more especially things that go to make our nation strong. And what would be dangerous in such crisis is for democracy itself becoming a victim. We should take care of it because we attach value to that not only normally but even in crisis. But democracy must be made to function in an effective and speedy way and not in the slow-moving methods to which we are normally accustomed.

"I am very grateful to you for the speedy and efficient way you have conducted your proceedings. I have taken more time than all of you put together and you will notice that. But

I thought I might put to you what I had in my mind for your consideration.

“Thank you.”



## **NINTH ANNUAL GENERAL BODY MEETING (August 31, 1963)**

“Friends, ever since the inception of your Institute you have been electing me as its President. Though I knew that I could do no more than participate in its Annual General Body Meeting, I agreed to accept its presidentship because I thought that that might help you a little. But as has been observed, here, it has tended to produce some stagnation. It is better that the President should change and some younger man should take my place because it would infuse some freshness.

“I think that your Institute is necessary and is doing good work. I do not know in detail about its work but I believe that it is going in the right direction and the work which it has done is essential and useful.

“We are at present faced with many problems. There is the problem of planning but the problem of administration also is important. Ever since we won our freedom we have devoted some thought to the structure of administration. It has changed a little and is changing but on the whole the old structure has continued. The administration has become somewhat confined in the old frame. This has had an adverse effect on our work. Firstly, decisions are considerably delayed and consequently the implementation is also delayed, which gives rise to increase in expenditure and other undesirable consequences.

“Secondly, we have a much bigger problem to face—the problem of corruption in public administration and elsewhere about which there are loud complaints. The complaints may be exaggerated; still there is some substance in them. There may

be difference of opinion as to the extent of corruption but in any case we have to make all possible attempts to eradicate it. How is this to be done? Every Government tries to meet this problem and our Government also has a special department and Special Police Establishment, etc., to uproot it. Every month I get a long list of the number of cases inquired into, of action taken against big and small officers, but our rules and regulations are generally complicated and make it difficult to take action. They are good insofar as they provide security of service but they are bad because they obstruct action, except when somebody is caught red-handed. Even then, the rules are so complicated that it is difficult to take action. I think that we should consider whether the rules and even the Constitution require some amendment, so that we may take action against an evil which, we know, exists. This is a matter deserving attention; your Institute should consider this.

"After achieving our Independence, we took to planning and drew up big projects. In many cases implementation of these projects was delayed, giving rise to increase in cost. To some extent the fault lies with the administration because responsibilities were not properly allocated with the result that at every stage reference to a higher authority was required. We were repeatedly advised to delegate responsibility so that the man on the spot could take quick decisions. Something has been done in this direction but perhaps more is to be done. We have to consider how we can activate our administration so that decisions could be taken quickly at every level.

"There are many other problems besides this but the most important issue is to put an end to corruption. Now a difficulty crops up. I do not know of other countries, but in our country it has become a profession, almost an industry, to make wild allegations. Charges are made recklessly and if everyone of them has to be investigated, a huge department may have to be set up. Most of these allegations are either baseless or highly exaggerated. As you have heard, there is a public authority in Sweden appointed by the Legislature with full powers to inquire into charges of corruption. Nothing is beyond his jurisdiction. He is empowered even to inquire into the conduct of High Court Judges. I thought that a similar institution in our country might be introduced but since, as I have said, we have a large scale industry

of professional accusers, we may require more than one authority of this type to look into all these allegations. So, we have to find some way and I would like you to consider this problem of eradication of corruption.

"Along with this, we have also to do away with inefficiency. I agree that we should not be too hard but some way must be found to make it possible for the efficient and bright men to advance and the inefficient to be weeded out. Consideration of seniority is desirable to some extent but it is not wholly desirable because it pays regard only to the length of service or age to the detriment of efficiency. Things are different in science. In mathematics or mathematical physics it is commonly held that the brain functions with the highest efficiency between the ages of 18 and 25. The mind is creative within this age limit. It functions even after 25 but it is not regarded as a creative mind. In some other branches of science the creative age may be a little more but it is commonly supposed that no big scientist does any creative work after reaching the age of 40. He still works but he does not make any new discoveries. Now, if this principle were to be applied in administration, it should be applied to the Prime Minister before all others. There are difficulties in picking up brilliant men for the manifold new tasks which are before us. Old minds may be good but they are still old and they cannot bring a new outlook to these new tasks. We have many senior men and they are very good. I do not mean to cast aspersions on them but difficulties do crop up if we go by seniority alone.

"We have a project which is working very well, that is, our Atomic Energy Department. It has a very large staff, about 3 to 4 thousand, headed by very responsible men as Directors but you can hardly find a Director who is more than 30 or 35 years of age. They are all young men, though they are doing a very responsible job. Some of them are below 30; some of them are between 30 to 35. There are few who have reached 40 and this is the reason why we have made and are making good progress in developing atomic energy. Our young scientists attend conferences all over the world and are held in esteem and I think that similar progress could be made in every sphere if we pay regard to efficiency and not merely to age. We should respect age but it does not mean that it should always occupy a premier position—the chair. So, we should consider this

matter and amend our rules so that they do not force us to go by age only.

"I attended a seminar on work study this morning. This is a subject in which your Institute is interested. Other countries have benefited greatly by work study. Work study is concerned with doing the work better with more speed, efficiency and economy. I was impressed to see how this work study has led to new techniques and very useful results. My attention was first drawn to this in England by Lord Mountbatten many years ago who showed me how considerable economies were effected by making only a little change here and there. He was in charge of the Navy at that time. He showed me how a small improvement resulted in saving of hundred thousand pounds and also some economy in the staff. Small improvements and administrative adjustments as a result of work study resulted in a total saving of 4 lakh pounds. Therefore, the Institute should take a special interest in work study and it is good that we have made a beginning. We have already effected some economy in our foreign missions and reduced our staff as a result of work study. Some economies have also been made in our ministries here, though not to the fullest extent. Work study is a modern method. It started from the factories and has spread to administration. It was Ford who began work study and other big industries in U.S.A. and in England followed him. Later on it was applied to administration. In the beginning it was confined to clerks. Gradually it was realised that it should extend to higher officers and men of the top rank and not to clerks, because in those days generally the men at the top sat in their chairs and only found fault with others. So we have to begin the work study at the top and from there proceed downwards. Your Institute should take up work study and train people in it.

"We have to learn new techniques because while we make very good and well conceived plans we fumble in execution. Partly due to administrative lapses and partly to defects in planning, we falter in execution. This is not the fault of a particular individual. It is our method of work which gives rise to delay. If we can remove these defects we can effect considerable saving in time and material. I think that you, or our Planning Commission pointed out that as much as 1/4th or 1/5th of our outlay is spent on erection of buildings alone. Evidently we can effect

great economy if we could cut down the construction cost. This would set free large funds for our Plans and other projects. Some engineers have made recommendations but I do not think they have been fully implemented. Despite the fact that everyone knows that our construction methods are out of date and very expensive, we have not been able to implement the suggestions for improvement. This shows the big gap in our thinking and execution. I believe about 100 crores are set apart for buildings in our defence expenditure, and similar amounts in other plans too. Everybody says that even a little economy in construction could easily result in a saving of 15 to 20 per cent and even a 15 per cent saving means a saving of a hundred crores. This would set free large funds for other work. Therefore, it is a matter for urgent consideration why there is such a big gap in our thoughts and actions, why it takes so long and makes it so difficult to put our ideas into effect.

"We are faced with very knotty problems which are getting knottier every day—problems of shortage of funds and resources on the one hand and of pushing our projects with speed on the other. Therefore, we have to readjust our whole administrative apparatus, so that persons who could work fast may be able to do so and things may move faster. We cannot move fast if we continue with old men, purely out of respect for age.

"So, you have to ponder over all these problems and perhaps you may have discussed them in your seminars. However, this matter of administration has become very important for us, specially for our plans. It is an essential function of your Institute to interest yourself in this matter and to offer advice, to make suggestions and to work for their acceptance. So, I have placed before you a few ideas which occurred to me and I hope that you will think over them."







## Appendix



## THINKING BIG\*

Paul H. Appleby

Once in a while I am struck here by a cautious and frugal attitude in public planning and public administration which does not reflect sufficient confidence in the future of India.

The most brilliantly successful leaders in business, in universities, and in public life that I have known have been men who were willing to 'build big' in confidence that the future would support their efforts in ways they could not fully anticipate. I should like to see that attitude more often, more variously and widely present here. I think it is justified. I have seen enough here to get great confidence in India's future success.

To illustrate what I am talking about, let me refer to the inclination in the government to be afraid to increase the size of annual recruitment to the I.A.S. and other services. There is a tendency to calculate future needs too much in terms of past experience. There is a fear that the engineers now finding employment in connection with dams and canal construction may not later be needed by the government. On the other hand, when great needs arise a decade hereafter, the Government will not, perhaps, be able to find all the personnel it might require for the execution of its development plans.

With all labour-saving equipment, the Government of the United States, apart from its armed services but including state, county and municipal government, had 6.13 millions of employees in 1951. Excluding persons employed in governmentally financed

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\* *IJPA*, January-March, 1955, Vol I, No. 1, pp. 59-60.

schools and universities, the total number of employees was 4.44 millions. India had altogether 2.15 millions in comparable employment. Since the population of India is  $2\frac{1}{4}$  times as large as that of the United States, and since India is undertaking through government a good many activities which in the United States are carried on privately, it is safe to say that the number of employees in governments of all levels here will increase enormously in years to come. This increase should be anticipated.

I am not arguing, of course, for an undisciplined unconcern about putting persons on the public payrolls. I am arguing simply for an approach to the subject that will reflect a willingness to let the future cure many of its own problems and a general confidence in the success and growth of the Indian government. This sort of attitude will have a great deal to do in ensuring the rich future that is anticipated.

*(From a talk)*